香港中文版

WITICOMICS

R.O.D

READ OR DIE

1



原作 倉田英之

漫畫 山田秋太郎

R.O.D
READ OR DIE
1
原作・倉田英之
漫畫・山田秋太郎 文傳


第一話




R.O.D
THE LAST LITERATURE D-LINE OF U.K.
READ OR DIE
AGENT
YOMIKO READMAN "THE PAPER"


READ
OR
DIE

P.O.D

PEACE OR DIE

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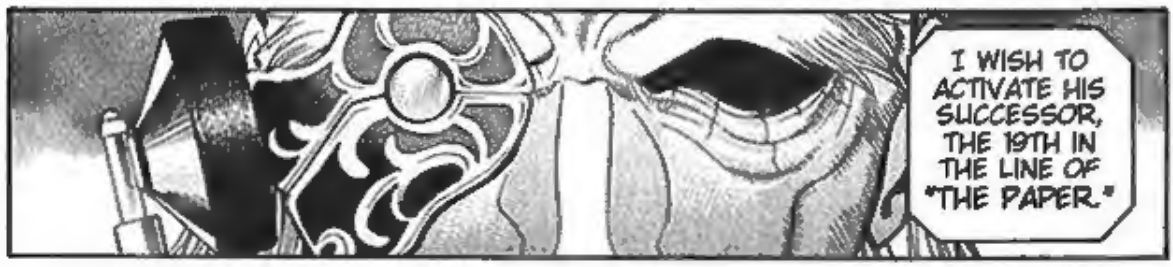
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#Manga-Sketchbook@DALnet


THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN JAPAN.
L.L.L.U.
U.K.
YES... IT'S BEEN AGREED UPON.


THE LAST LITERATURE D-LINE OF U.K.
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

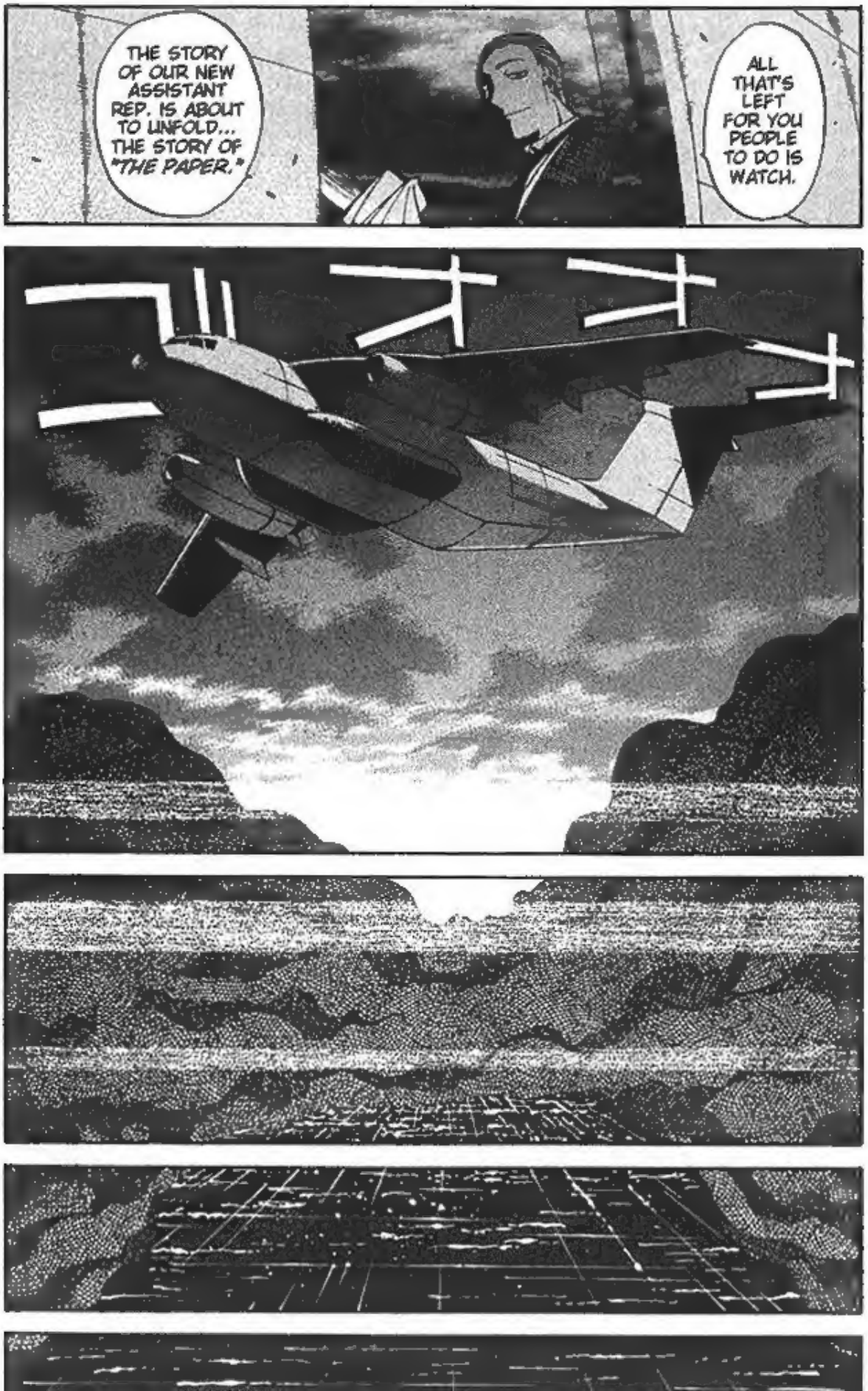

...YES, I'LL HANDLE IT PERSONALLY.
"THE PAPER" SHOULD BE ACTING AS MY ASSISTANT REPRESENTATIVE.
...NO, I'M NOT REFERRING TO TONY NAKAJIMA.

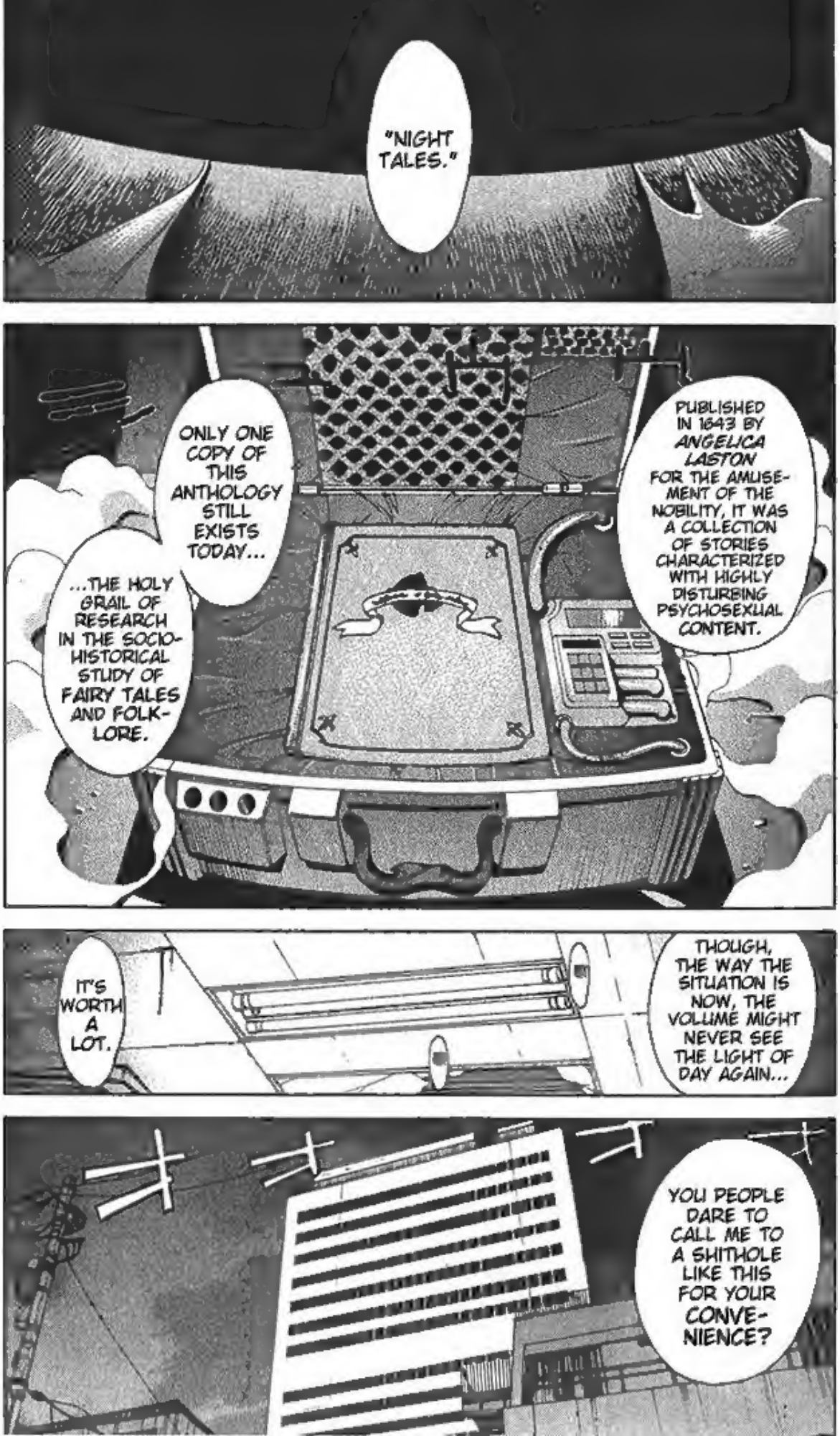

I WISH TO ACTIVATE HIS SUCCESSOR, THE 19TH IN THE LINE OF "THE PAPER."


...YES, I UNDERSTAND.
THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY. I SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET MY HANDS ON IT.


VERY GOOD.
THE MAN YOU'LL BE MEETING WILL APPEAR AT THE AGREED LOCATION ACCORDING TO PLAN.
IS "THE PAPER" READY?
ER, YES.


I'M RETRIEVING THIS WISDOM FOR THE GLORY OF THE GREAT BRITAIN.
THANK YOU, WENDY.
MR. JOKER? OUR OPERATIVES ARE ON STANDBY. WE CAN BEGIN AT ANY TIME.


THE STORY OF OUR NEW ASSISTANT REP. IS ABOUT TO UNFOLD... THE STORY OF "THE PAPER."
ALL THAT'S LEFT FOR YOU PEOPLE TO DO IS WATCH.


"NIGHT TALES."
ONLY ONE COPY OF THIS ANTHOLOGY STILL EXISTS TODAY...
...THE HOLY GRAIL OF RESEARCH IN THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL STUDY OF FAIRY TALES AND FOLK-LORE.
PUBLISHED IN 1643 BY *ANGELICA LASTON* FOR THE AMUSE-MENT OF THE NOBILITY, IT WAS A COLLECTION OF STORIES CHARACTERIZED WITH HIGHLY DISTURBING PSYCHOSEXUAL CONTENT.
IT'S WORTH A LOT.
THOUGH, THE WAY THE SITUATION IS NOW, THE VOLUME MIGHT NEVER SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY AGAIN...
YOU PEOPLE DARE TO CALL ME TO A SHITHOLE LIKE THIS FOR YOUR CONVE-NIENCE?


HEH, SORRY ABOUT THAT. BY THE WAY, NICE JOB YOU DID,
REALLY SMOOTH.

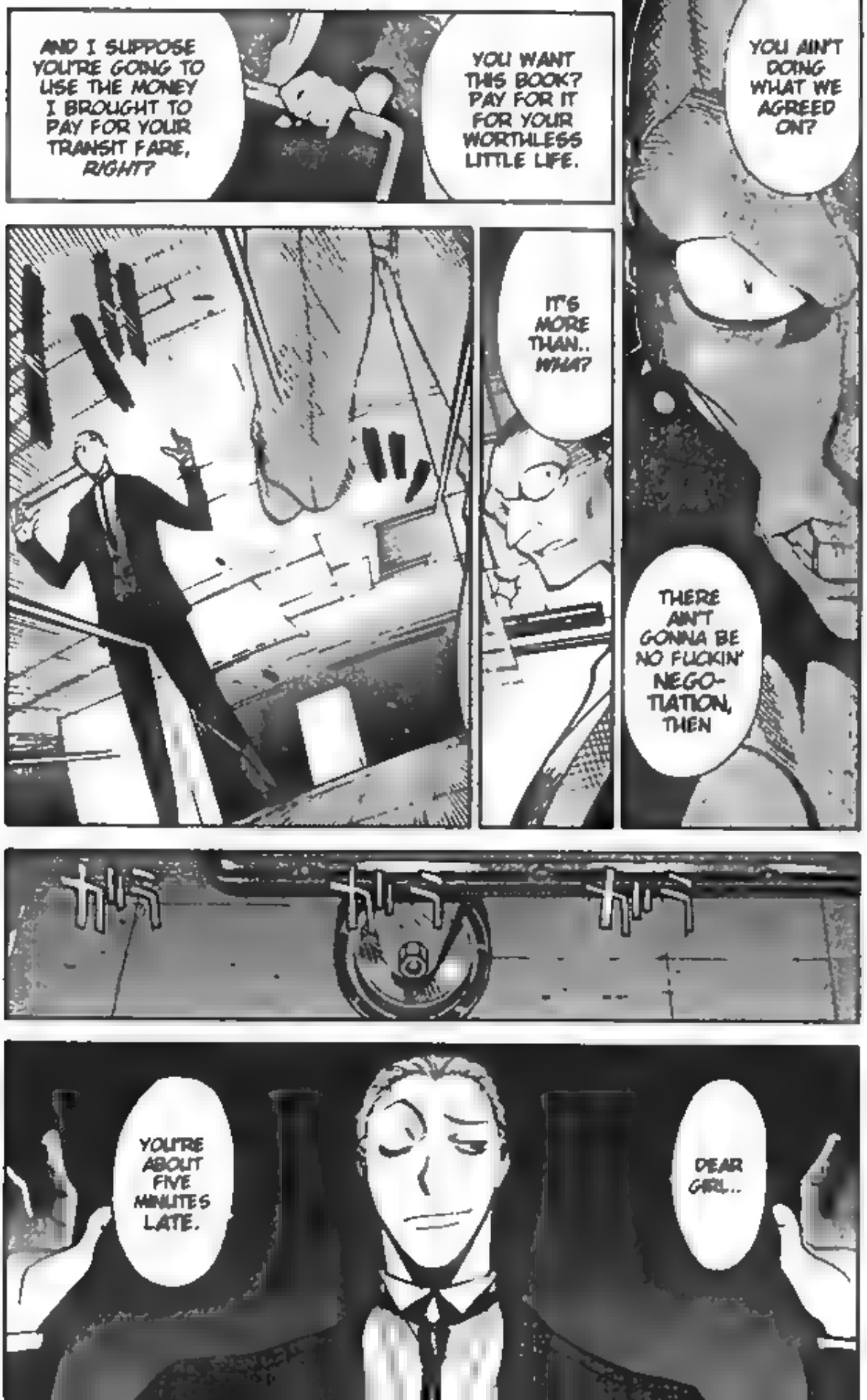

"POISON" OR "READING", HMM?

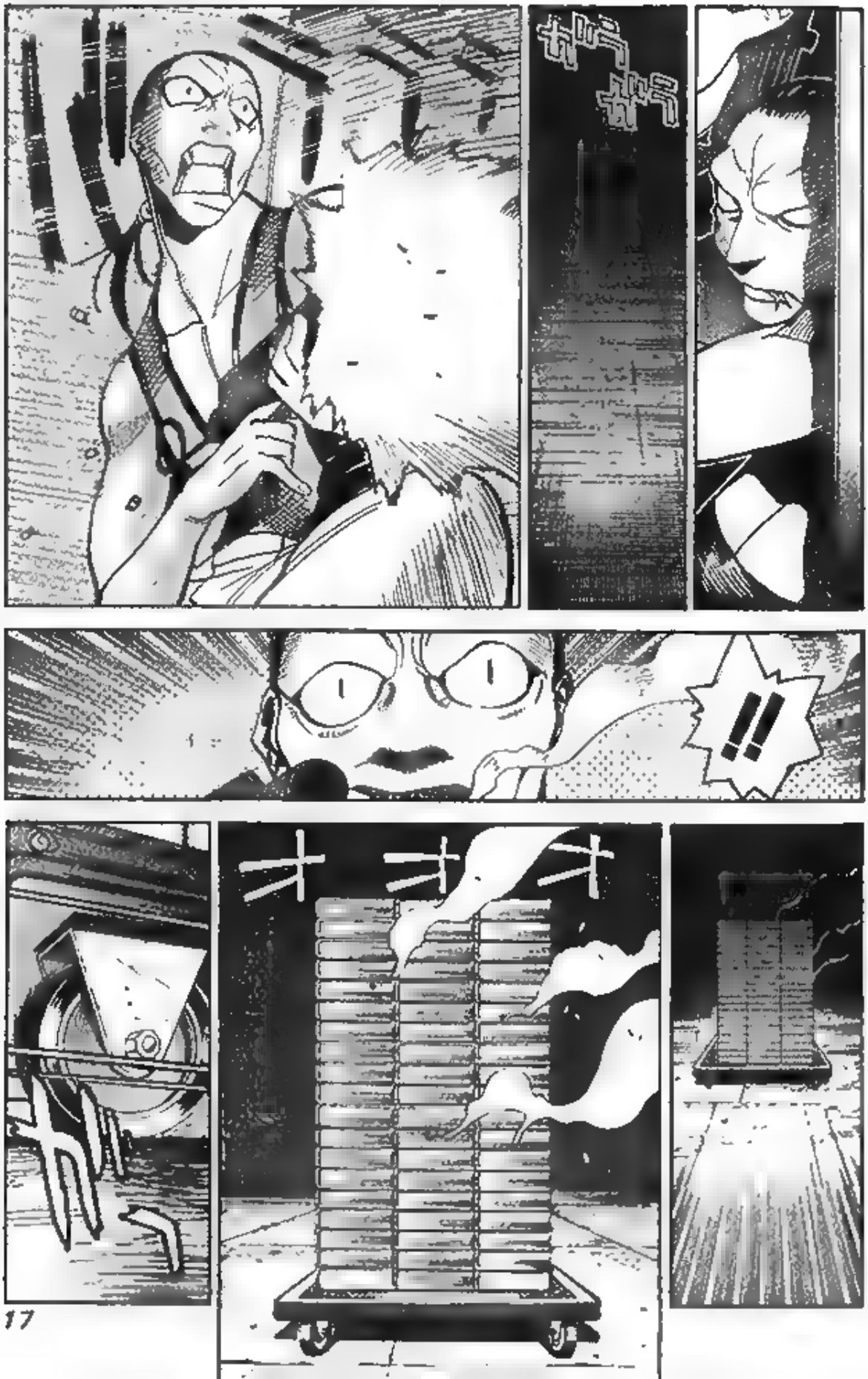

I THINK I LET MY MOUTH RUN A LITTLE TOO MUCH.
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
.....


HAND OVER THE FRICKIN' MONEY!
I'VE DONE THE JOB, MAN. I DON'T WANNA LISTEN TO YOU BLAB.
THERE'S NO NEED TO HURRY. I JUST WANTED TO TALK TO YOU FOR A BIT.


DIDN'T EXPECT ANYTHING LESS FROM MR. "POISON SNAKE" WU... NO, "READING SNAKE" IS MORE ACCURATE, I THINK. DON'T YOU THINK SO?
YO, I'M TALKIN' BUSINESS HERE. FORK O'ER THE MONEY.


YOU ASIANS ARE SUCH WORKAHOLICS... YOU SHOULD LEARN TO LOOSEN UP A BIT ...
WHAT THE FUCK?
AT LEAST, I DON'T THINK MYSELF TO BE ALONE IN THIS BELIEF
THE BRITISH ARE GREAT BELIEVERS IN THE ART OF ENJOYING LIFE...
AT LEAST SLOW DOWN ENOUGH TO SMELL THE FLOWERS...
YOU LITTLE PIECE OF SHIT!
YOU STILL INSIST ON HOLDING CONVERSATIONS IN SUCH AN UNCIVILIZED MANNER?
OH DEAR
YOU'RE JUST TRYIN' TA WASTE MY TIME WHILE YOUR ACCOMPLICE SHOWS UP. IS'SAT IT? YOU SAID YOU WERE COMIN' ALONE!

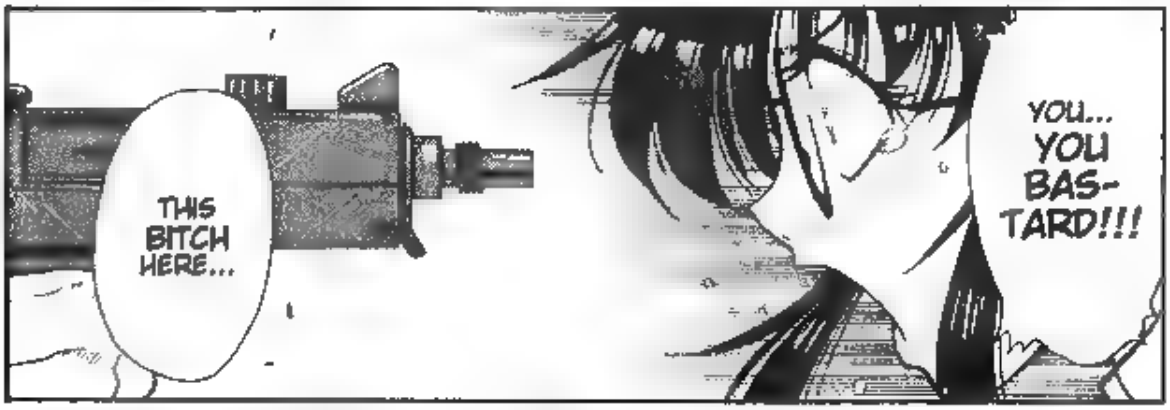

AND I SUPPOSE YOU'RE GOING TO USE THE MONEY I BROUGHT TO PAY FOR YOUR TRANSIT FARE, RIGHT?
YOU WANT THIS BOOK? PAY FOR IT FOR YOUR WORTHLESS LITTLE LIFE.
YOU AIN'T DOING WHAT WE AGREED ON?
IT'S MORE THAN.. WHAT?
THERE AIN'T GONNA BE NO FUCKIN' NEGO-TIATION, THEN
YOU'RE ABOUT FIVE MINUTES LATE.
DEAR GIRL..

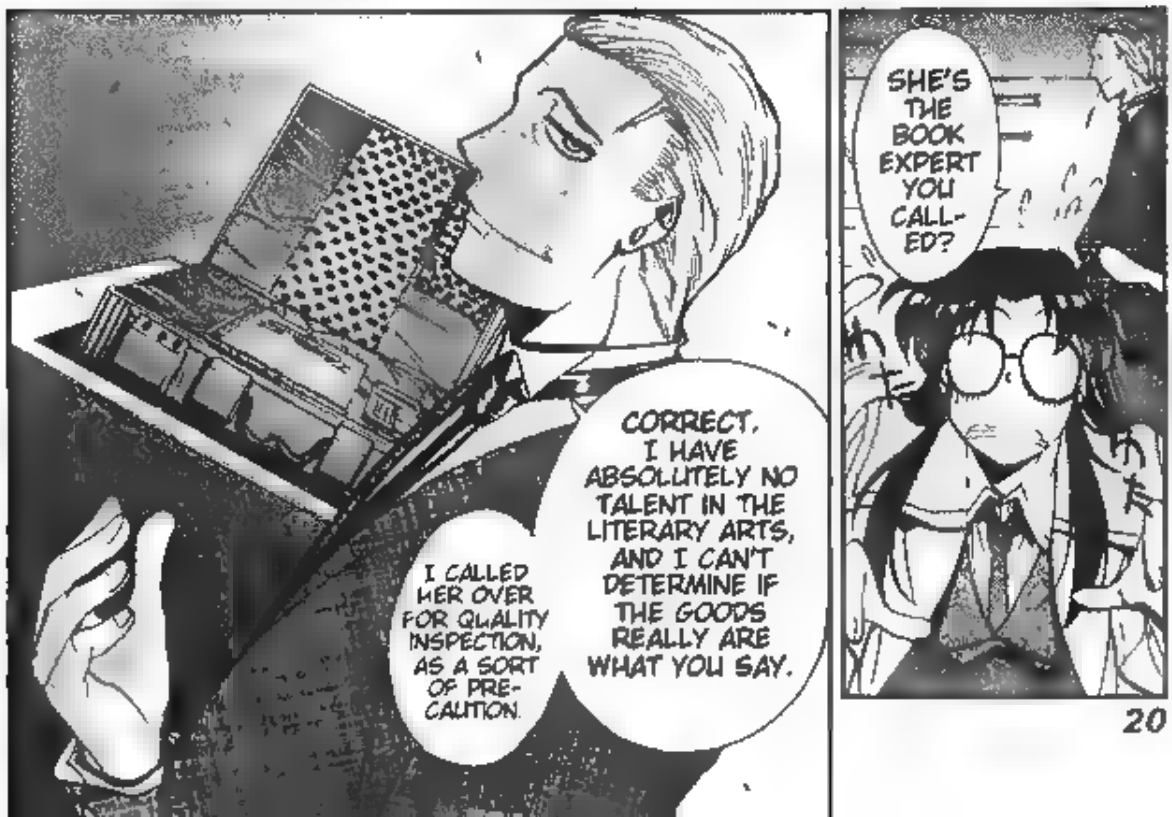

ガラガラ
!!


AAARGH!
SHIT!
SHE'LL BE EXAMINING THE GOODS BEFORE WE FINALIZE OUR DEAL.
I APOLOGIZE FOR SURPRISING YOU A BIT.
I GOT A LITTLE TOO EXCITED, AND THE CART GOT OUT OF HAND...
OH... OOPS.


A GIRL?
PHOO!
HOW COME THIS GIRL'S HERE !?
THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN TO BE YOUR SHOPPING CART, DOES IT, YOMIKO?
THE USED BOOK STORES IN THIS AREA HAVE SOME REALLY NICE COLLEC-TIONS!
I TOOK EVERYTHING I COULD FIND, BUT I'LL RETURN THE STUFF THAT I DON'T NEED! I PROMISE!


OI, BRIT!
AH
"THE TWILIGHT OF THE ANARCHY BOOK," FIRST EDITION...!
THIS IS SOME-THING I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR FOR A REALLY LOOONG TIME!


THIS BITCH HERE...
YOU... YOU BAS-TARD!!!


I CALLED HER OVER FOR QUALITY INSPECTION, AS A SORT OF PRE-CAUTION.
CORRECT. I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO TALENT IN THE LITERARY ARTS, AND I CAN'T DETERMINE IF THE GOODS REALLY ARE WHAT YOU SAY.
SHE'S THE BOOK EXPERT YOU CALL-ED?


SOB
ANAR-CHY BOOK...
THERE'S HOLES IN IT...
-SOB-
SOB
YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, YOU FUCK?
-SOB-
SOB


FORMALITY IS NECES-SARY TO ENSURE THE SMOOTHNESS OF THE PROCESS.
.....


BONG!
OH, I BELIEVE YOU.
DON'T GET ME WRONG. THIS NEGOTIATION MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO THE BOTH OF US.


I'LL ADD A FURTHER TWENTY PERCENT TO THE PRICE WE AGREED UPON.
OF COURSE TO EX-PRESS OUR APOLOGIES. WE'RE WILL-ING TO GIVE YOU SOME BENEFITS.
THIS SORT OF ACTION IS COMMON-PLACE IN BRITAIN. I HOPE YOU DO NOT MIND


HMPH!
YOMIKO? YOU CAN LOOK AT IT NOW. DO YOUR THING.
THIRTY IS FINE. LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE BOOK.
SO




CAN... CAN I...
...CAN I REALLY TOUCH HER?


HEHE HEHE ...
HEHE HEHE ...


YES, YES.
OI!
YOU CAN LOOK.
DON'T READ IT, THOUGH.


CAN'T SURVIVE A DAY WITHOUT READING.
SHE'S A NATURAL BOOKWORM, I TELL YOU.


SHE'S REALLY SPECIAL.
SHE USES ALL FIVE SENSES TO IMMERSE HERSELF IN THE REALITY OF THE BOOK.
AT TIMES, SHE SMELLS OR TOUCHES WHAT SHE'S READING, OR PERHAPS TASTES IT WITH HER MOUTH.
HER REACTION TO READING IS QUITE SIMILAR TO SEXUAL ECSTASY...
TO TELL THE TRUTH, SHE'S LITERALLY IN LOVE WITH BOOKS...
HER ACCURACY IN DETERMINING BOOK VALUE IS NEAR ABSOLUTE.


HAA
YES...
IT'S THE REAL THING.
HAA
HAA
HOW IS IT?
IF YOU FUCKERS ARE FINISHED, HAND O'ER THE MONEY.
ALL DONE...
WE'RE DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU.
WHAT ...
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?
!!

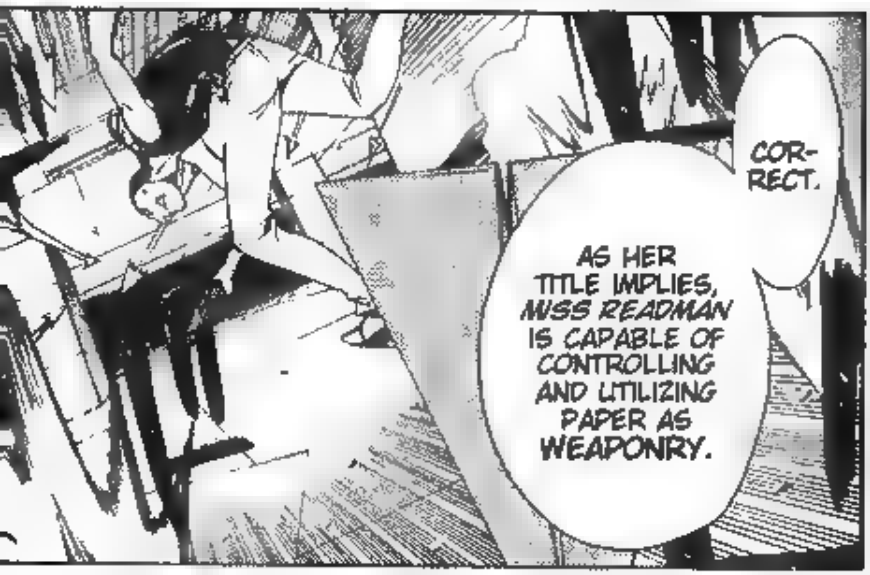

SHOULD BE PERFECTLY CLEAR.
IT'S PAPER.
JUST PLAIN, OLD-FASHIONED PAPER.
STOP FUCKIN' AROUND WITH ME!
I'M NOT DOING ANY SUCH THING.
IN BRITAIN, THINGS LIKE ETIQUETTE AND JUSTICE ARE QUITE RESPECTED.
QUITE CLEARLY, YOU DEMONSTRATE NEITHER.
TWENTY YEARS AGO, THIS VOLUME WAS STOLEN FROM THE ROYAL BRITISH LIBRARY BY A GROUP OF THIEVES WITNESSES LATER IDENTIFIED TO BE ASIAN...
TO PUT IT SIMPLY, SIR, YOU'RE SELLING STOLEN GOODS.


YOU PIECE OF SHIT!
IN THE NAME OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LIBRARY'S DIVISION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS,
I'M RETURNING THIS VOLUME TO WHERE IT RIGHTFULLY BELONGS!
BUT WHAT PISSES ME OFF THE MOST IS THAT YOU FUCKING EXECUTIVE-CLASS WANKERS TREAT ME LIKE DISPOSABLE TRASH... I'M NOT AN IDIOT!
LEMME TELL YOU A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME... I'VE BEEN CALLED A LOSER FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER.
PISSES ME OFF LIKE I'M ABOUT TO GO NUTS.

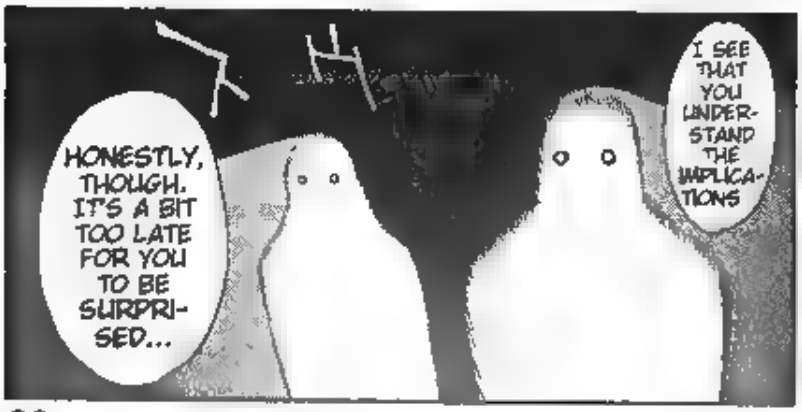

YOU!
DON'T... DON'T SHOOT! WHAT IF YOU ACCIDENTALLY HIT THE BOOKS!?
IDIOT!
!!
PA-PER!?
YOU USED PAPER? AND WHAT'D YOU CALL ME?
YOU FRICKIN' CALLED ME AN IDIOT!


SHIT!
BAS-TARD! WHERE THE FUCK DID YOU GO!?
COME OUT SO I CAN FUCK YOU UP GOOD!
THIS IS ONE OF THEM COUN-TERFEIT BILLS!!
THIS... AIN'T THIS...


THESE ARE...
WHA ...
WHAT THE HELL?
... PAPER AIR-PLANES ...
YOU'RE A PAPER MASTER!?


COR-RECT.
AS HER TITLE IMPLIES, MISS READMAN IS CAPABLE OF CONTROLLING AND UTILIZING PAPER AS WEAPONRY.


YOU FRICKIN' CONTROL THESE THINGS?


I SEE THAT YOU UNDER-STAND THE IMPLICA-TIONS
HONESTLY, THOUGH, IT'S A BIT TOO LATE FOR YOU TO BE SURPRI-SED...


フュ フュ フュ
DIE, FUCK-ER!!
!!!
DE-COYS?
I'M GONNA KILL YOU!!


SHIT!
MAY I SUGGEST THAT YOU QUIETLY SURRENDER?
UGH!
YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND. I'M ASKING THIS FOR YOUR SAKE. THERE ARE THINGS IN THIS WORLD PEOPLE LIKE YOU AREN'T CAPABLE OF TAKING ON.
YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW THAT, YOU FUCK!? THAT'S WHY I KEEP THIS THING ON ME AT ALL TIMES..
COME AND GET ME!!
I'LL KILL THE BOTH OF YOU!!
MY VENOM STAFF IS ENOUGH TO OFF YOU FUCKERS IN A SINGLE BLOW!!


I'M SORRY...
I REALLY DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS. HOW ABOUT I CONTACT YOU NEXT TIME? WE CAN SPEAK THEN.
WHAT THE HELL!?
AAAAARGH!


UGH...
NOW THAT WE'VE COME TO AN AGREEMENT, IT'S TIME WE CLOSED THE DEAL
KILL KILL KILL KILL!!
!!
YOMIKO? COULD YOU HELP ME CLEAN UP. I'M AFRAID WE'VE MADE A BIT OF A MESS.
OH DEAR... I WAS SO SURE YOU WOULD ACCEPT MY PAYMENT.


DO 'YA HEAR ME!?
DON'T TREAT ME LIKE A FRICKIN' IDIOT, YOU WAN-KER!!
I SAID IT BE-FORE ...


!!
I DON'T WANT NO FRICKIN' MONEY ANYMORE! JUST GONNA BURN THE GOODS! YOU TWO JUST WATCH ME!
IT DOESN'T MATTER NO MORE..
WATCH IT BURN!!
NO!
HEH LOOKS LIKE THE BASTARD WAS RIGHT WHEN HE SAID YOU'RE A STUPID FUCKIN' BOOK-WORM.
YOU'RE A GO-NER...


LOOKS LIKE THIS PAPER MASTER AIN'T REALLY WORTH ALL THAT.
HEHE HE...
HMMM... LOOKS LIKE YOU STILL HAVE SOME TRAINING TO CATCH UP ON, PAPER.
SORRY...
JUST A LITTLE GIRL AFTER ALL..
ARE YOU WATCHIN', BRIT? COME OUT WHERE I CAN SEE YOU!!
ARE THOSE WHO TRULY LOVE BOOKS... RIGHT?
BUT AS THEY SAY ... THOSE TRULY LOVED BY BOOKS..
NO...
YOU TWO ARE GOIN' ON A LITTLE TRIP. SEE? THOSE PILES OF WORTHLESS SHIT ARE GONNA GO WIT' YOU WHEN YOU MEET YOUR MAKER. THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR LIKIN' BOOKS TOO MUCH.
JUST FUCKIN' PILES OF PAPER. THEY AIN'T WORTH THE TROUBLE, BRIT.


THE PAPER HASN'T GIVEN UP HOPE IN US.
THE PAPER STANDS BESIDE US.


YEAH? THEN I'M JUST GONNA HAFTA SEE HOW THESE PIECES OF PULP ARE GONNA PROTECT YOU FROM MY STAFF...




SHIT...
JUST A PIECE OF PAPER...




TODAY'S MENU: HUMAN SHISH-KEBAB! SOUNDS GOOD, NO?


PAPER..
NO WAY...
OI... OI...
NO FUCKIN' WAY!
LOOKS LIKE HE'S GUESSED IT.
SORRY!
IT'S FUCKIN' IMPOSSIBLE!


R.O.D 1
HEAVENS...
I FEEL SORRY FOR THE PERSON CLEANING UP FOR US...
39


IT'S ALL PAPER!!!
怎……麼……會……!?
<CHINESE KANJI'S FOR 'WTF'>
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THE GENTLEMAN SENT US TO MEET YOU!
THE GENTLEMAN, EH? STILL AS QUICK AS EVER.
MR. JOKER!
I'M SORRY BUT SHE CAN'T HEAR YOU RIGHT NOW
EX-CUSE ME?
YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL SHE FINISHES READING SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO HEAR YOU BEFORE THEN.
GREETING THE PAPER MASTER IS OUR PLEASURE.
IF IT'S POSSIBLE, I HAVE SOME DOCUME-NTS I NEED HER TO SIGN

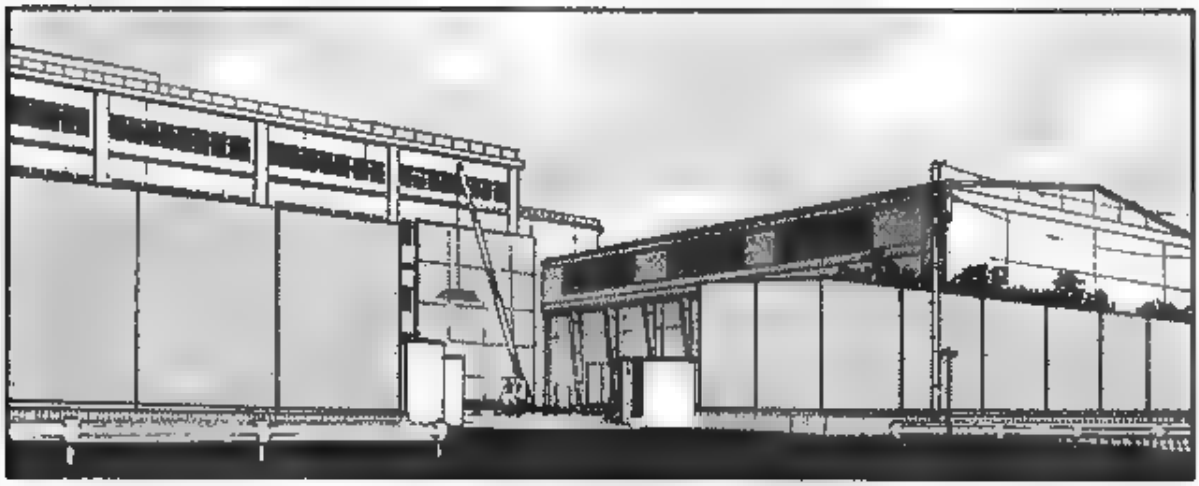

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ガラ ガラ ガラ
HE HE HE ...

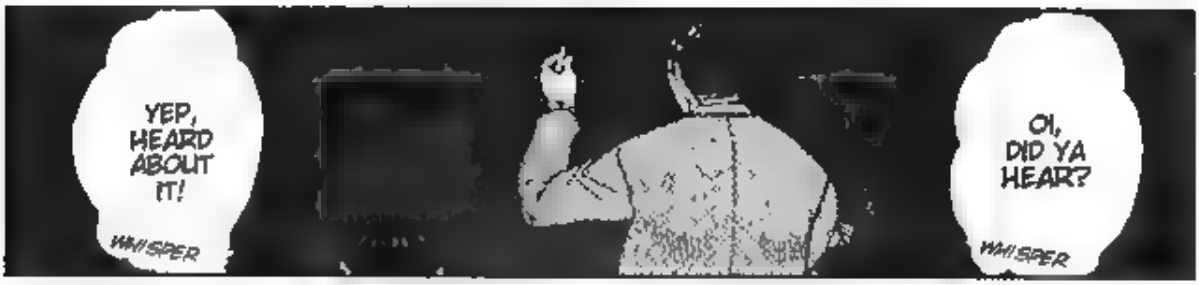

EX-CUSE ME!
SHE'S SOMEWHERE IN THIS HIGH SCHOOL, STUDYING AND READIN AWAY... MUST BE HARD ON HER...
STARTING TODAY, I'LL BE WORKING HERE AS A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER!
YOMIKO READMAN DESU!



CHAPTER TWO

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YEP, HEARD ABOUT IT!
WHISPER
OI, DID YA HEAR?
WHISPER


YEAH. THE ONE FROM THIS MORNING...
THAT NEW SUBSTI-TUTE...
YOU MEAN THE ONE THAT'S REPLACING ABE-SENSEI, RIGHT?
THE ONE WITH GLAS-SES?
OH, HER!


YEAH...
CRAZY BITCH...THE TRIMESTER'S JUST STARTED, AND SHE'S ALREADY SUGGESTING BOOKS TO DO BOOK REPORTS ON FOR THE SUMMER.


DIDN'T LOOK LIKE SHE HAD ANY BAGS OR ANY-THING.
WHERE'D SHE HIDE ALL THOSE BOOKS SHE WAS CARRYING, THOUGH?


I HAFTA SAY, THOUGH. WITH A LITTLE POLISH, SHE COULD TURN INTO A REAL BABE.
CHECK OUT THOSE TITS
HEH. YOU INTERESTED IN THAT KINDA WOMAN?


HAD TO PULL HER OFF BY FORCE AT THE END OF THE ASSEMBLY
THE DISCIPLINARY HEAD LOOKED LIKE HE WAS HAVING A HELL OF A TIME DECIDING WHEN TO STOP HER.


IF YOU ASK ME...
HAA
HAA
WHO?
YOU KNOW HER NAME?
HAA
SO WHAT IF I AM?


SUMI-
REGAWA-
SENSEI!!


EXCUSE ME WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU ARE DOING, MISS READ-MAN? WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A CLASS RIGHT NOW
I'M JUST TOO EXCITED... SO EXCITED I COULD BURST...
I JUST COULDN'T STAND WAITING ANYMORE, SO I CAME OVER.


AH?


"LOVE SONGS FROM THE CEILING" WAS A REALLY GREAT READ,
BUT THIS... THIS BOOK IS EVEN BETTER!


IT BROUGHT ME TO TEARS!


THAT'S RIGHT! I'LL KEEP YOUR AUTOGRAPH AS A FAMILY TREASURE AND PASS IT ON FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION!


SEN-SEI!!
I NEED AN AUTO-GRAPH FROM YOU!
MY...MY DAUGHTER GAVE ME THIS FOR MY BIRTH-DAY...
SHE SEWED THIS FOR ME HER-SELF!!


WAIT, ALMOST FOR-GOT...
AN AUTO-GRAPH ...

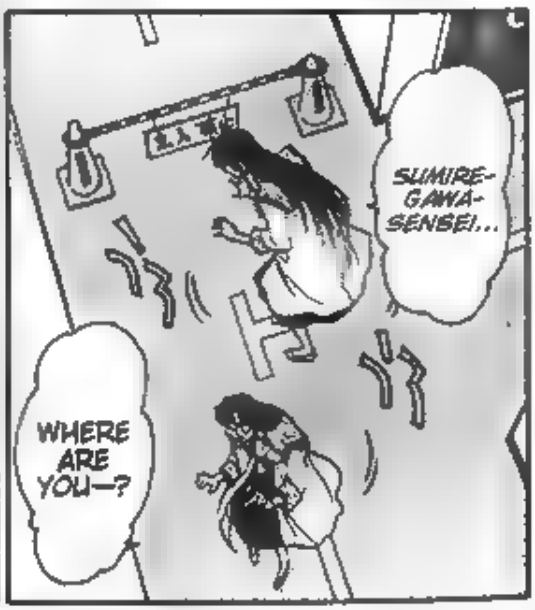

PLEASE! JUST GIVE ME YOUR AUTOGRAPH!
COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP, AND I PROMISE I WON'T DO ANYTHING BAD TO YOU, SUMIREGAWA-SENSEI!!!


SHE USUALLY GOES THERE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE DEADLINES TO CATCH UP ON WRITING...
UMM...
YES! YOU! SPEAK!
NENENE SHOULD BE IN THE LIBRARY...
THANK YOU! BYE-!
THE SUBS-TITUTE.
THAT'S THE ONE I WAS TALKIN' ABOUT...
WHO... WHO THE HELL IS SHE?


YOMIKO READMAN.
YOMIKO.


HEHE... NEAR SHE IS, HER PRESENCE I FEEL...


HE HE HE ...


SUMIRE-GAWA-SENSEI...
WHERE ARE YOU—?


図書室
YOU OVER THERE! KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!


SHE MUST BE UNDERTAKING HER LABOR OF LOVE WITH ALL HER CONCEN-TRATION...
..FABRICATING ENTIRE SYMPHONIES OF HEARTBREAKING ROMANCE AND ENDLESS CORRIDORS OF EMOTION AND...
OH...
MY BELOVED SUMIREGAWA-SENSEI IS RIGHT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS DOOR..
AHEM ..
COU-GH!
COU-GH!
EXCU-
GO AWAY!
EH?


AH!
GRAB!
GET OUTTA MY FACE!!
?
HAA
HAA
WHY CAN'T YOU PEOPLE DO YOUR CONSTRUCTION WORK SOMEWHERE ELSE!?
IT'S TOO FRICKIN' LOUD! I CAN'T CONCENTRATE AND I HAVE A HEADACHE!
AH?


I'LL GIVE YOU A MINUTE TO GET THOSE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS OUTSIDE TO STOP BUGGING ME!
EH?
YOU! FOUR-EYES!
Y-YES!
YOU INTERRUPTED MY WORK, SO YOU'RE DOING THIS TO REIMBURSE ME FOR LOST TIME! NOW, GET OUTTA MY FACE!
.....
SUMIREGAWA..
...SENSEI?
NO WAY...


"ORIGI-NALLY, SHE WAS SIMPLY A GIRL WHO LIKED TO WRITE..."
UM... EXCUSE ME?
TAKATAKA
TAKATAKA
"... HAD NO INTEREST IN TAKING CARE OF PETS..."
"THE ELIXIR OF MERTILAND WAS CAPABLE OF HEIGHTING THE CALIBUR OF ANY SWORD IT..."
TAKATAKA
AMA-ZING!
SHE'S TYPING TWO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT THINGS AT ONCE..


I...
OH YEAH! THAT'S RIGHT!
THIS... THIS ISN'T THE SEQUEL TO THE "CRIMSON STUDY," IS IT?
I HAVEN'T EVER SEEN THIS WORK BEFORE! IS IT SOMETHING NEW YOU'RE WORKING ON?
SUMIRE-GAWA-SENSE!!
I'M ONE OF YOUR BIGGEST FANS! COULD I HAVE YOUR AUTOGRAPH PLEASE?

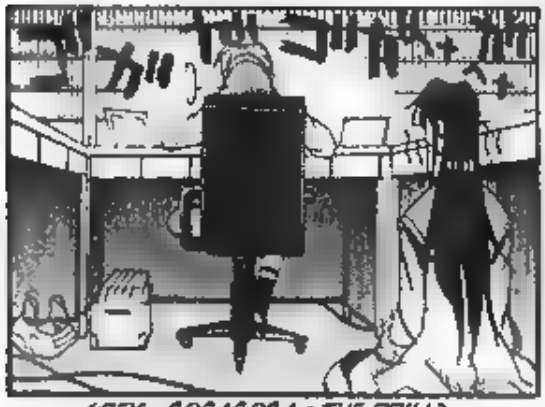

"THE FIRST LIPS ENCOUNTERED..."
"THE AIR BETWEEN THEM GREW IN WEIGHT WITH EVERY MILLIMETER OF HER APPROACH..."
MUMBLE MUMBLE
LIPS!!
LIPS!?
HM...
LIPS...
SUMIRE-GAWA-SEN-SEI?
LIPS!
LIPS...
LIPS...


!?

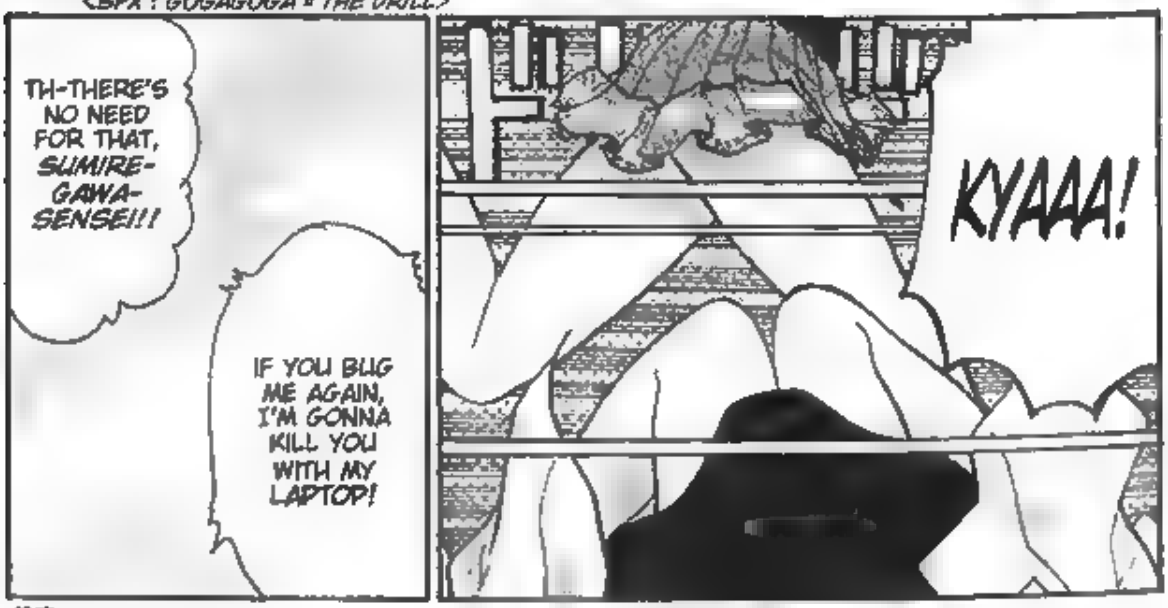

"AS SOFT AS STEAM FRESHLY RISEN FROM WATERS HOT WITH THE HEAT OF PASSION!"
OK!
AHH...
UGH?


HOW COULD YOU WASTE YOUR FIRST KISS LIKE THIS!?
I COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT THINGS LIKE THAT. IF IT'S FOR THE SAKE OF MY WRITING, THINGS LIKE FIRST KISSES CAN GO TO HELL!


HOW COULD YOU DO THAT, SUMIREGAWA-SENSEI? WHY DID YOU SUDDENLY KISS ME?
THAT'S THE SECOND TIME I'VE BEEN KISSED IN MY LIFE, YOU KNOW!
SHUT THE HELL UP!
I'VE NEVER BEEN KISSED UP UNTIL NOW!
TAKATAKA
TAKATAKA



<SFX : GOGAGOGA = THE DRILL>




I'M ONE OF YOUR BIGGEST FANS!
EH?
WHO THE HECK ARE YOU?


READ IT.
WHO ARE YOU...?


HMM?
ARE YOU THE ONE WHO'S BEEN STALKING ME LATELY?
I, UM, HAVEN'T BEEN STALKING YOU EXACTLY...


Paul: I'll pick you up soon.
RECENTLY I'VE BEEN RECIEVING THESE STUPID PHONE CALLS WHERE THERE'S NO SOUND AT THE OTHER END. SOMEBODY STALKS ME WHEN I WALK ON THE STREETS, AND I'VE BEEN GETTING THESE NOTE-THINGIES.
WHO'S THIS PAUL GUY?


SUMIREGAWA NENENE.
MY NAME'S NENENE.


YOU LOVE CHEESE-CAKE!
WHEN YOU TAKE BATHS, YOU START WASHING FROM YOUR LEFT FOOT!
YEAH, I KNOW!
YOU'VE BEEN PUBLISHING SINCE YOU WERE 13! OVER A HUNDRED THOUSAND VOLUMES HAVE BEEN SOLD UNDER YOUR NAME! YOU'RE A TOTAL GENIUS!


NO, NO. YOU HAVE GOT IT ALL WRONG. I ONLY STARTED STALKING YOU THIS MORNING.
SO, UH... THAT'S WHY YOU'VE BEEN STALKING ME RECENTLY?


OH, ALMOST FORGOT! I NEED YOU TO GIVE ME AN AUTO-GRAPH!
UH...SO?


I'M NOT AN IDOL, AND I'M NOT A GENIUS. I'M NOBODY SPECIAL. IF THIS IS HOW YOU WANNA EXPRESS INTE-REST IN ME, YOU'RE GOING THROUGH A LOTTA TROUBLE FOR NOTHING. I'M JUST A NORMAL GIRL.
LISTEN UP, 'KAY? I'M ONLY GONNA SAY IT ONCE. MY WORK IS MY WORK, AND I'M ME


I REALLY LOVE YOUR BOOKS, SENSEI.
PAUSE!
THAT'S WHY I CAME HERE, SEE? I WANTED TO SEE THE PERSON WHO PRO-DUCES ALL THESE MASTER-PIECES...

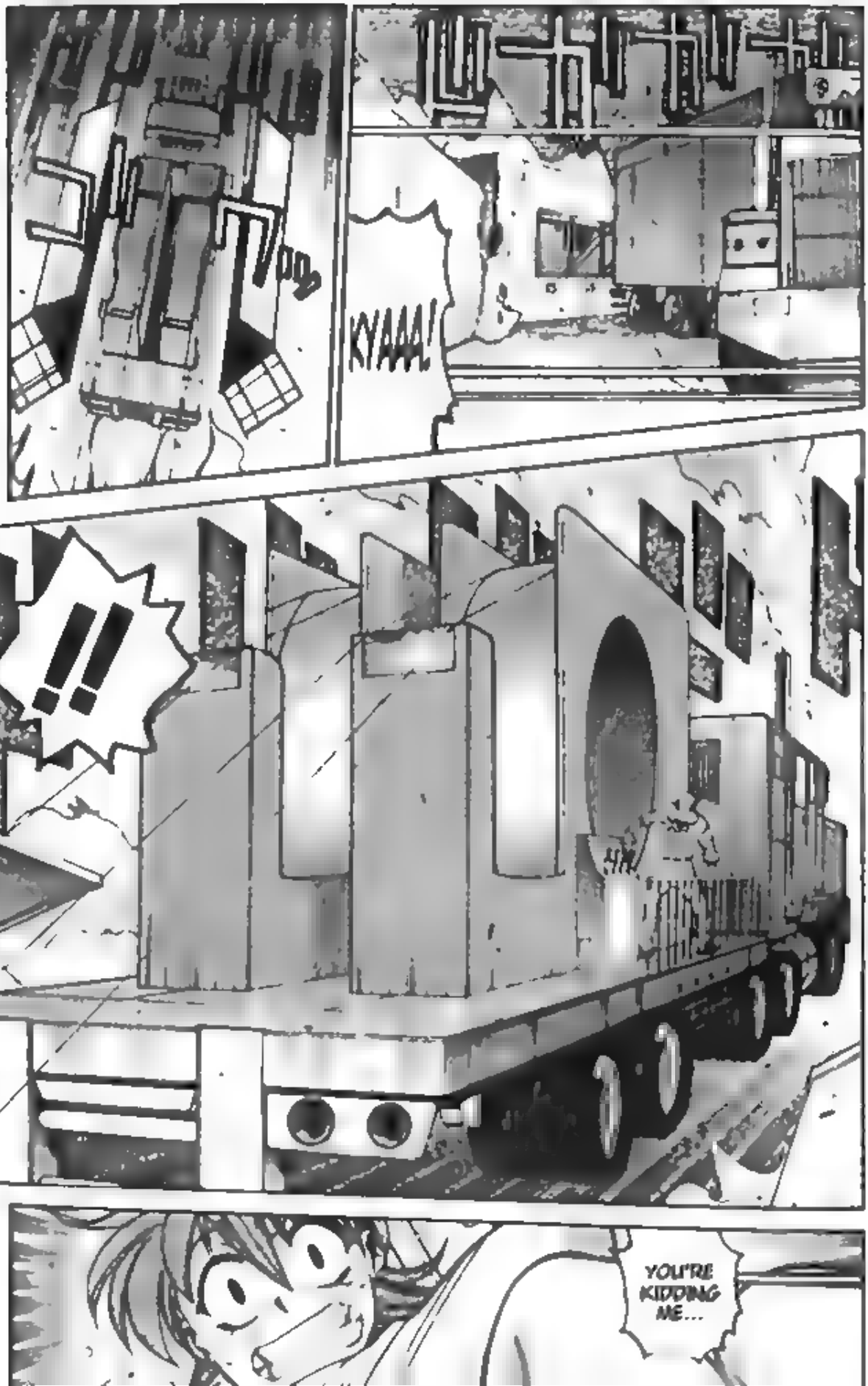

THAT'S WHY...
THE PAPER IN YOUR BOOKS TELL ME YOUR THOUGHTS.
BUT...I THINK A WRITTEN WORK IS A REPRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDENTITY.
I REALLY REALLY RESPECT YOU, SENSEI.
THANKS, I GUESS.
...ER, OK...
UM...
IT'S TIME.
THANK YOU, SENSEI!! AS YOUR BIGGEST FAN, I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU WANT!
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO HELP ME, OR I'M GONNA ASK YOU TO LEAVE.
YOU CAN STAY HERE IF YOU WANT, BUT I HAVE A DEADLINE COMING UP.


!?
WHAT THE HECK? IS THIS AN EARTH-QUAKE OR SOME-THING?
SUMIRE-GAWA-SENSEI?
UM, I SUGGEST YOU PACK THINGS UP A BIT. I THINK SOMEBODY'S TRYING TO ROB YOU.
THUN-DER! IT'S GOTTA BE THUN-DER!
DRIVE.


WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPE-NING!?


SUMIRE-GAWA-SENSEI!!
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT.
LOOK OUT! ABOVE YOU! ABOVE!
I'M YOUR BIGGEST FAN. FALLING BLOCKS OF CEMENT AREN'T ENOUGH TO KEEP ME DOWN!


WAIT UP A BIT!


KYAAA!
!!
YOU'RE KIDDING ME...


SUMIRE-GAWA-SENSEI!
REIN-FORCED WHEELS?
GIANT ROLLS OF TAPE!? WHAT THE HELL?


Chapter

I PROMISE I'LL BE BACK BEFORE DINNER TODAY.

YEAH, DEFINI-TELY.

HMM? UMM... WAIT A SEC, COULD YOU? I THINK I'M HEARING SOMETHING STRANGE ...

IT'S ALL GOOD.

ONE MORE DELIVERY AND I'M DONE.

!?

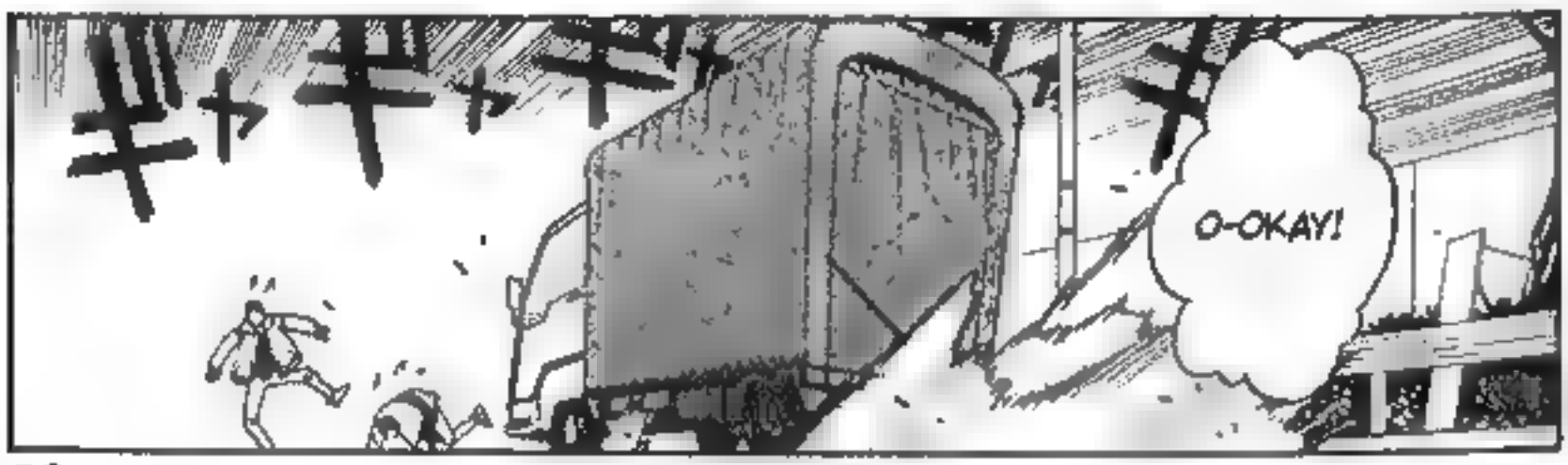
WHAT THE...!


I NEED YOU TO FOLLOW THAT VEHICLE UP AHEAD!
HURRY!




HELLO? HELLO?
OI, DRI-VER!

PLEASE!!


O-OKAY!




WAAH-! SOMEBODY SAVE ME!!


I'M COMING TO SAVE YOU RIGHT NOW SUMI-REGAWA-SENSEI!
IT'S DANGE-ROUS UP THERE!
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOIN' LADY!?

THE HIGHWAY?

!

HEY.

LOOK HERE.

MOMMY! I WANNA GO HOME!!

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME!?

EH?

BLINK BLINK

KYAAAH!

TARGET CONTAINED. READY.

DIS-ENGAGING SUS-PENSION.


!?
IGNORE IT!! JUST STEP ON THE GAS!
DAMMIT! WE'RE GONNA FRICKIN' DIE!
HIIIII!!!

WHAT THE HELL!?


ou-
chies... that hurt...
aah... nevermind about that now.
-:chu:-
don't leave me behind, *slumregawa-sense!!* i promise i'll save you from the clutches of those evil, perverted construction workers!
in the name of loyal readers everywhere, i'm gonna go punish those bastards!
eh? what's this!?

WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE !?

WE'VE BEEN SENT TO COLLECT YOU, MS. PAUL SHELDON.

MA-MAS-TER?

YOU MAY REFER TO US AS MESSEN-GERS.

WE HAVE ORDERS TO TAKE YOU TO THE RESIDENCE OF OUR MASTER.

CORRECT, MS. SHELDON. OUR MASTER SEEKS TO EXPRESS HIS UNDERSTANDING AND GRATITUDE FOR LABORS. HE IS A CONNESUER AMONGST YOUR READERS.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING!? SICKO!! *HENTAI!!*

.....

DID YOU JUST REFER TO MY MASTER AS A PER-VERT?

I'D BE OUTTA MY MIND TO COOPERATE WITH THE LACKIES OF SOME PERVERT WHO GETS OFF BY KIDNAPPING CUTE SCHOOL-GIRLS LIKE ME!

I HAVEN'T THE FAINTEST IDEA WHO THE HELL YOU PEOPLE WORK FOR, BUT HE **IS** A STALKER, AND THAT'S ALL I NEED TO KNOW!

WE'D APP-RECIATE IT IF YOU WOULD CO-OPERATE AND COME WITH US PEACE-FULLY.

NO.

STALKING ME DOESN'T HELP MY WRITING, YOU KNOW?

IF HE'S REALLY A LOVER OF BOOKS, HE SHOULD STICK TO READING.

WHAT, DID I SAY ANYTHING WRONG?

I'D LIKE TO MAKE SOMETHING CLEAR TO YOU, MS. PAUL SHELDON.

I HATE IT

IT IS HIS DEEPEST DESIRE THAT YOU ACCEPT HIS GUIDANCE AND ALLOW YOUR SKILLS TO TRANSCEND EVEN FURTHER THAN NOW

DAY AND NIGHT, HE SPENDS HIS EVERY WAKE HOURS READING AND ANALYZING YOUR WORKS, SEEKING TO IMMERSE HIMSELF IN THE SHEER VOLUME OF EMOTIONAL CONTENT YOU'VE PLACED IN THE TEXT.

MY MASTER IS NOT PERVERTED. HE'S A LOYAL READER OF YOURS.

HE IS THE MOST LOYAL READER YOU HAVE. YOU CAN UNDERSTAND HIS PLIGHT, CAN'T YOU?

SHELDON-SENSEI?


!!
WHAT IS THIS?

AAAH!

AAH!

WHAT'S HAPPE-NING!?

THERE'S MORE...

SHONEN JUMP!?

THIS... THIS IS...


A BRID-GE!?
SHE MADE A BRIDGE ENTIRELY OUTTA COPIES OF SHONEN JUMP!?
!!

少年 WEEKLY JUMP

R.O.D

01.

AH!

WHO ARE YOU!?

HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?

HEH, YOU KNOW WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN IN THE NEXT ISSUE?

A READER?

I'M A LOYAL FAN OF SUMI-REGAWA-SENSEI!

MY HOBBY IS READING, AND...

FORGOT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. SORRY ABOUT THAT. MY NAME IS YOMIKO READMAN. I'M A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER.

RIGHT. THAT'S WHY...

I'M GONNA REQUEST THAT YOU RETURN SENSE! TO ME *RIGHT NOW!*

AAH!

GRIP
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!!
FREEZE!!




EH?


BUL-
LETS-
BUL-
LETS-
BUL-
LETS!!
PAPER-
PAPER-
PAPER!!!


GOT
IT!!

DAMN!

AAAH!

I'M ALRIGHT. CAN YOU JUST GO STOP THE TRUCK OR SOMETHING?

HAI-!

HUR-RY!

ARE YOU ALRIGHT, SUMI-REGAWA-SENSEI?

THOSE GUYS DON'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY-THING AGAINST SHOOTING TO KILL. IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!

DON'T WORRY, SENSE!.

AH?

OHH...SHIT. NONONO! FORGET I SAID ANYTHING. DON'T GO.

AFTER ALL, I AM A LOYAL READER OF YOURS!


AUGH! DANGIT! NO PAPER!!
I THINK I LEFT THEM IN MY COAT...
HEYA.. HEYA..
I OBVIOUSLY HAVEN'T BEEN EXERCISING ENOUGH I SHOULD PROBABLY READ SOME MORE EXOTIC FICTION TO STACK UP ON VITAMINS AND OTHER NUTRIENTS..
I APOLOGIZE FOR THIS TRAVESTY, SUMIRE-GAWA-SENSEI!
IS OUR HEROINE LEFT WITH NO CHOICE BUT TO SACRIFICE HER MOST BELOVED TREASURE? STAY TUNED
WAAH...

AYE, WEDGE THE MASTER SHALL BE PLEASED WITH OUR ...!?

THIS MISSION WAS EASILY COMPLETED, I MUST SAY.

PAPER!?

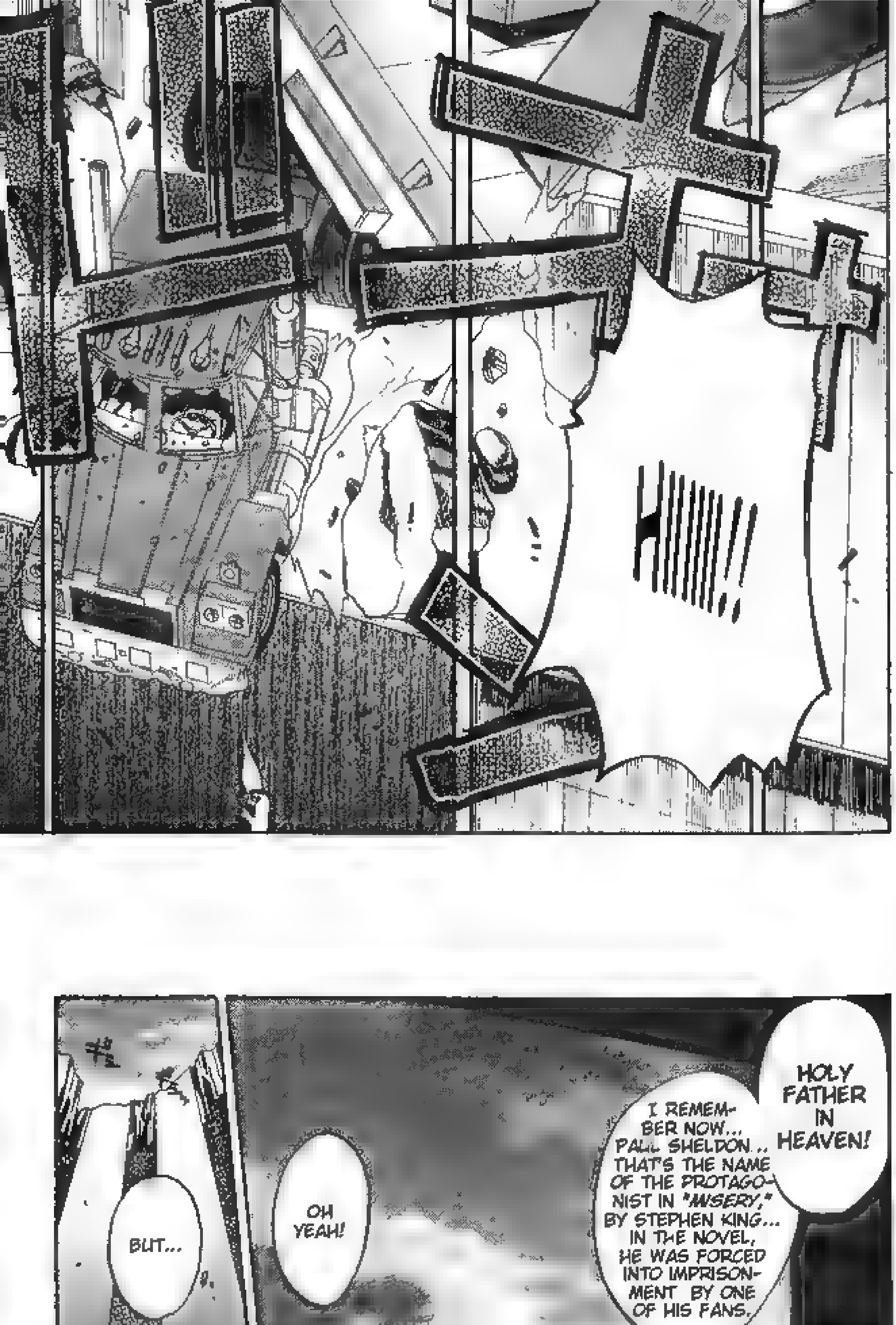
THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE WIND-SHIELD!!

WHAT IN THE NAME OF...

MERE PAPER ISN'T ENOUGH TO DO US IN!

I CAN'T SEE THE ROAD!!

VICKS! YOU IDIOT!! THAT'S THE EDGE OF THE BRIDGE!!


HIIIIIII!!
HOLY FATHER IN HEAVEN!
I REMEMBER NOW... PALL SHELDON... THAT'S THE NAME OF THE PROTAGONIST IN "MISERY," BY STEPHEN KING... IN THE NOVEL, HE WAS FORCED INTO IMPRISONMENT BY ONE OF HIS FANS.
OH YEAH!
BUT...

NEVER WOULD'VE THOUGHT MY BOOKS WOULD APPEAL TO PSYCHO-PATHS...

WE DON'T KNOW WHO THE HELL THE STALKER WAS...

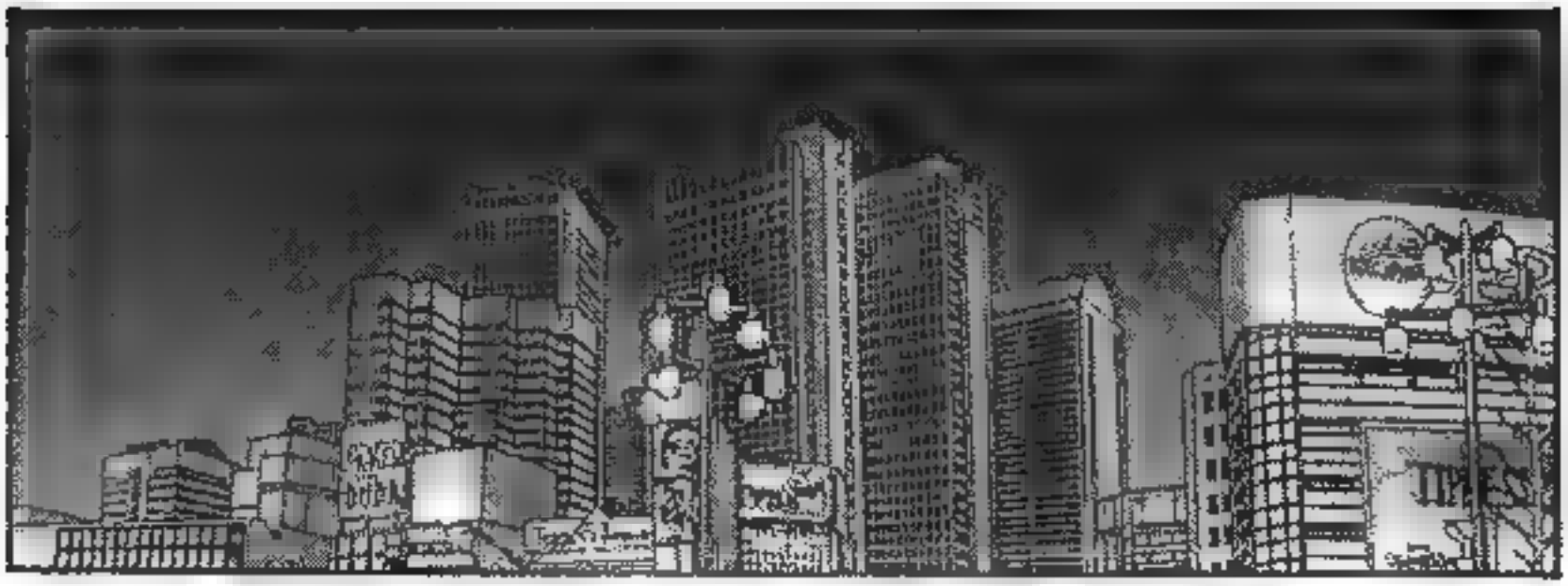
WHOEVER IT IS, I'LL PROTECT YOU FROM HIM.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

IF YOU'RE SO LOYAL, WHY THE HELL CAN'T YOU GET US OFF OF THIS MASKING TAPE THING?

I'M A LOYAL READER OF YOURS...

WHY ARE ALL MY READERS IDIOTS, MUTANTS, OR PER-VERTS!?


THE NIGHT IS TO BE HATED...
...SILENT.
IT IS COLD...
FOR ITS DARK-NESS ENVE-LOPES ALL.

THE PAPER.

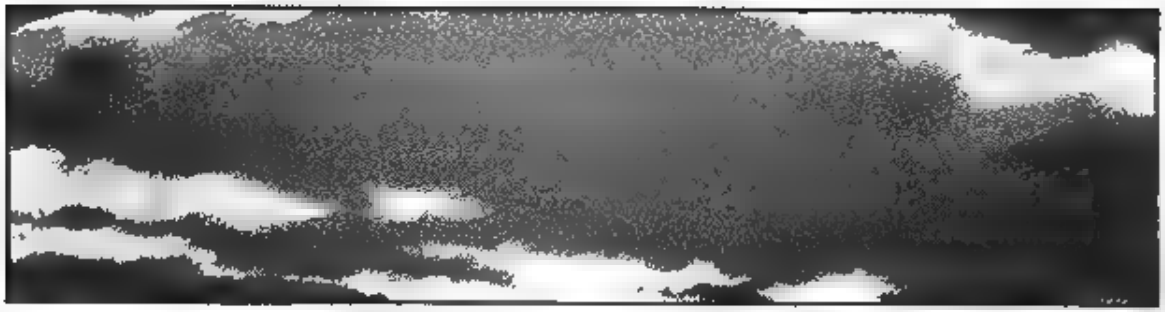
A DOG OF THE LAST LITERATURE DEFENSE LINE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM... "THE FORCE FLOWS STRONG WITHIN HER."

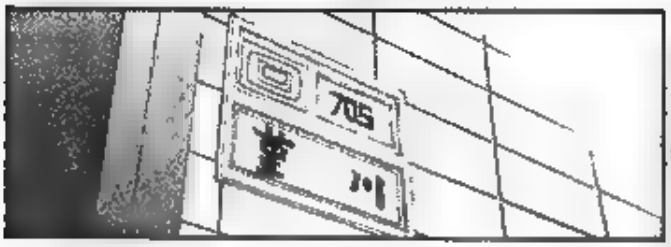
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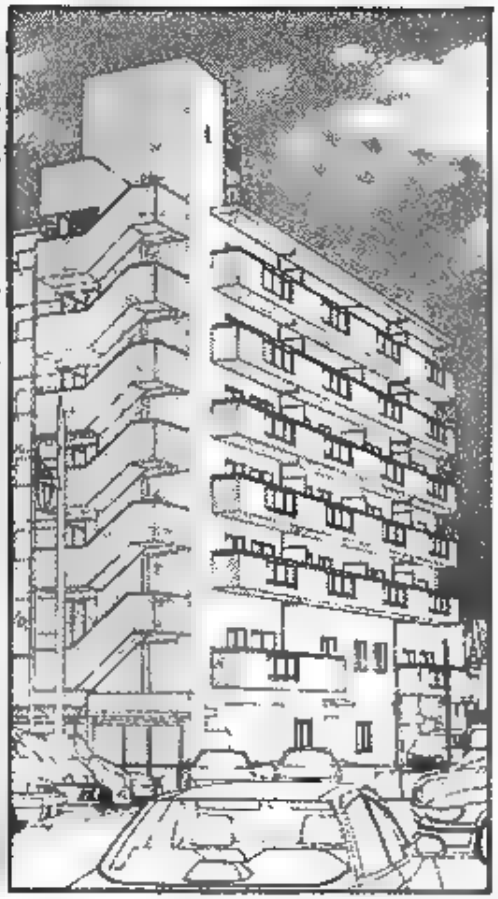
INTERES-TING...

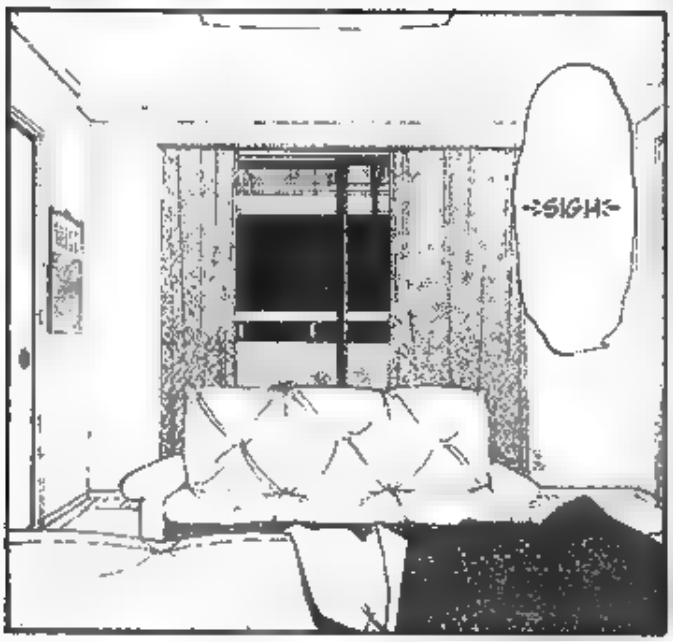
SHE'S WORTHY OF MY ATTEN-TION.


Chapter 4



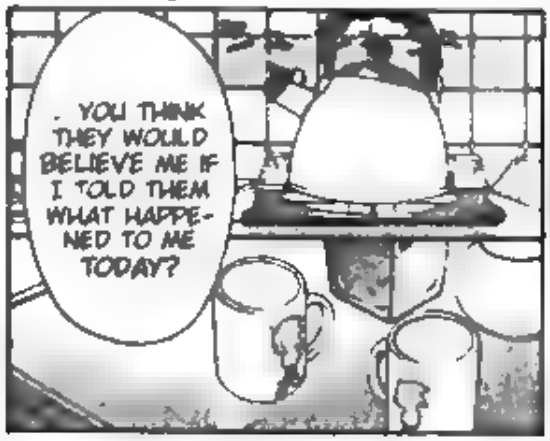

705




-SIGH-


FRICKIN' FINISHED ALL FOUR OF THE BOOKS I HAD TO DO BEFORE THE DEADLINE. I'M AMAZED.
I ACTUALLY MANAGED TO MAKE IT...


DONE WITH THIS CYCLE... MOVING ON...


. YOU THINK THEY WOULD BELIEVE ME IF I TOLD THEM WHAT HAPPENED TO ME TODAY?


I SWEAR TO AGATHA CHRISTIE, THOSE DAMNED EDITORS ARE TOTALLY INHUMAN.
I MEAN, C'MON! REQUESTING SOMEBODY WHO'S JUST BEEN KIDNAPPED TO STICK TO THE DEADLINE? DON'T THEY KNOW THE MEANING OF THE WORD "MERCY?"


"THEY CLAIMED TO BE WORKING FOR ONE OF MY 'LOYAL FANS' ..."
I'D SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS "YEAH SOME IDIOTS CAME OUT OF THE BLUE AND DISMANTLED THE PART OF THE LIBRARY I WAS WORKING IN WITH THE INTENT OF KIDNAPPING ME."


UM..


BUT
I'M NOT YOUR SIZE.
THE CLOTHES I HAD ON THIS AFTERNOON ARE ALL RIPPED UP, AND THE REST OF MY NORMAL STUFF IS IN THE WASH...
THE CLEANERS WILL BE UP WITH SOME OF THE STUFF IN A LITTLE WHILE JUST PUT UP WITH IT FOR A LITTLE BIT AND YOU'LL HAVE YOUR CLOTHES BACK IN NO TIME.


UHHH EXCUSE ME, SUMIREGAWA-SENSEI? I'M NOT VERY COMFORTABLE WITH THIS CHANGE OF CLOTHES YOU HAVE FOR ME ARE YOU SURE THERE'S NO ANOTHER ONE?

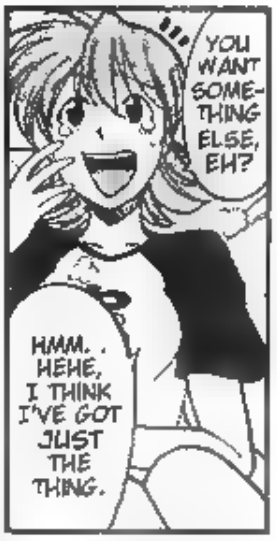

I'M ALREADY TWENTY-FIVE... IS WEARING THIS REALLY PROPER?


HOW SHOULD I PUT THIS...

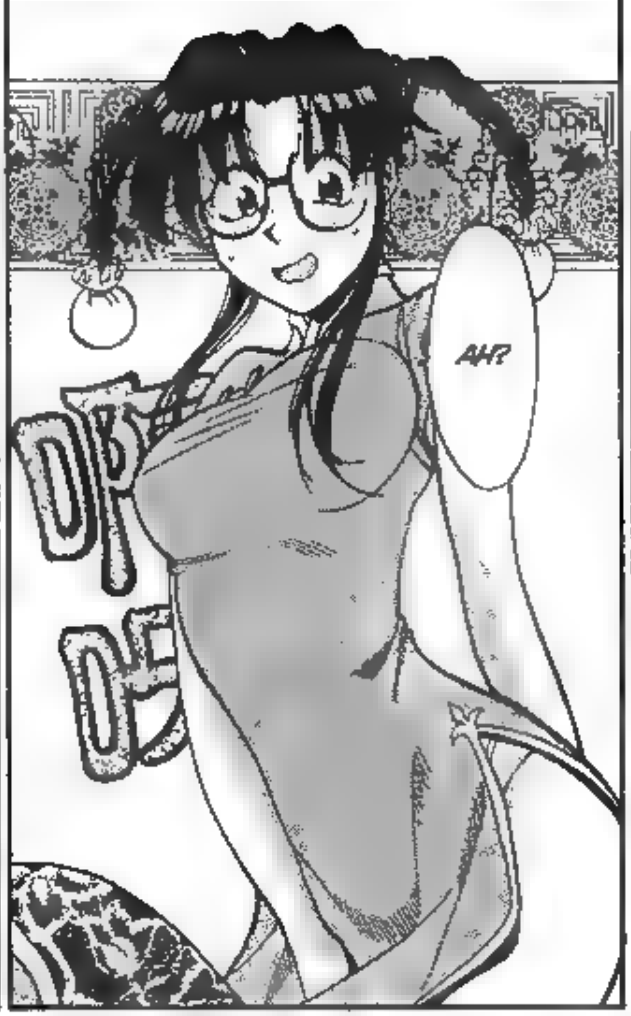

UMM, SUMIRE-GAWA-SEN-SEI..?
HE! HE! HE! IT'S NICE! LOOKS REAL CUTE ON YOU!! HEHEHE!


IF IT'S POSSIBLE, I'D LIKE TO CHANGE INTO SOMETHING WITH A SLIGHTLY LONGER SKIRT...
IT'S EMBARASSING, THOUGH...


MY "SPECIAL" WARDROBE, AT YOUR SERVICE. I'LL LET YOU TRY SOME OF IT OUT.
SINCE YOU SAID YOU WANTED IT, HERE WE GO.


YOU WANT SOME-THING ELSE, EH?
HMM.. HEHE, I THINK I'VE GOT JUST THE THING.


COULDN'T TELL WITH THAT DUMB-LOOKING COAT YOU HAD ON EARLIER, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR CURVES ARE IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES.
SENSEI! DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!
LIFT


AH?


W-WAIT! WAIT, SENSEI!
JUST RELAX, OKAY? DON'T MOVE AROUND TOO MUCH.
AH?


DARN... DOESN'T LOOK RIGHT ON YOU. YOU GO BETTER WITH THE MORE MATURE LOOK.
I'M NOT A BARBIE DOLL, SENSEI...



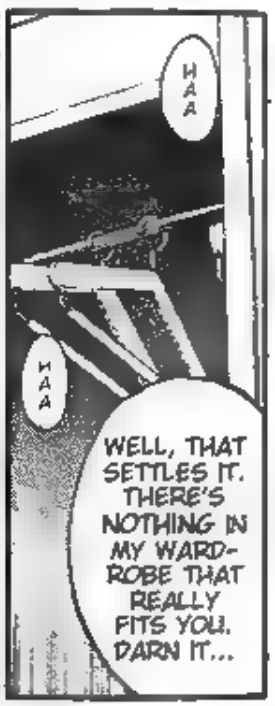

HMM... LET'S TRY THIS OUTFIT WHADDYA' THINK?
NO, SENSEI! NOT THERE!


HOW'S THIS ONE!?

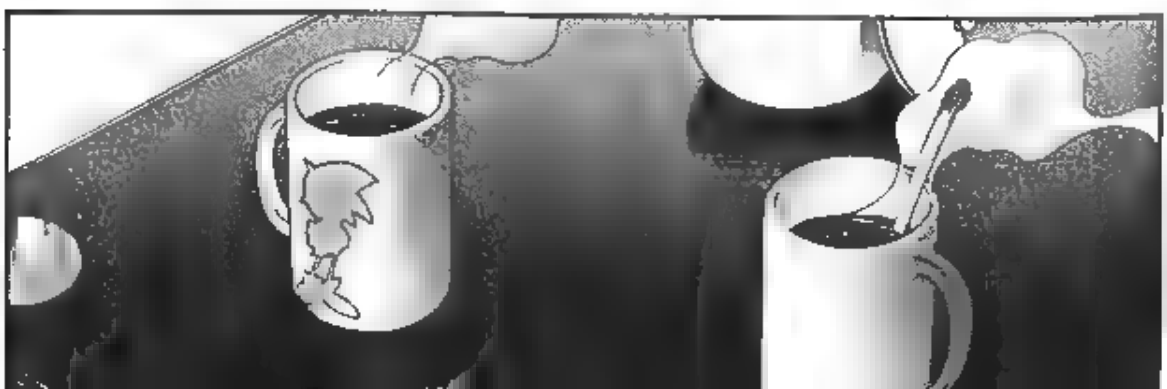

OKAY, OKAY...
ACK! DEFINITELY NOT! WEARING THIS IS WAY TOO DANGEROUS!!
.....


NOOO-!!
HERE!! THIS ONE BRINGS OUT THE ADULT IN YOU, DON'TCHA THINK!?


HAA
WHY DO YOU HAVE ALL OF THESE STRANGE COSTUMES, SENSEI? IS IT SOME SORT OF COSPLAY FETISH I'VE NEVER HEARD ABOUT? HONESTLY ...
HAA
NAH, IT'S NOTHIN' LIKE THAT... MY "SPECIAL" WARDROBE JUST INCLUDES THE STUFF I COLLECT FOR REFERENCE WHEN I'M PREPARING TO WRITE A NEW NOVEL


HAA
HAA
WELL, THAT SETTLES IT. THERE'S NOTHING IN MY WARDROBE THAT REALLY FITS YOU. DARN IT...


HAA
-SNAP-
-DING-DONG-
HEH. 24-HOUR LAUNDRY SERVICE, "FROM DUSK TILL DAWN."



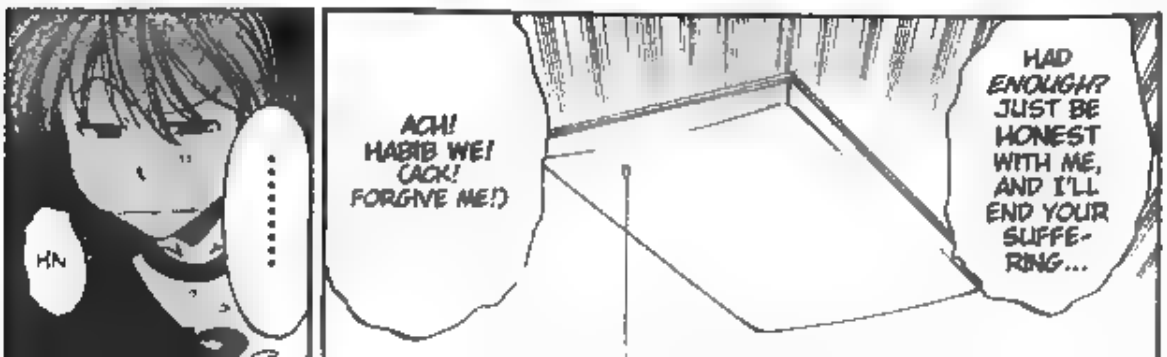

ITADAKIMASU!
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS, THE GUYS WE SAW TODAY WERE PROFESSIONALS?
RIGHT I ALSO DON'T THINK THEY WOULD JUST ARBITRARILY KIDNAP PEOPLE OFF THE STREETS, THEY SEEM TO BE HIGHLY SELECTIVE IN THEIR TARGETING.
THAT'S CORRECT THEY WERE EXCEPTIONALLY WELL TRAINED SO WELL TRAINED INFACT THAT THEY COULD ONLY HAVE COME FROM AN ORGANIZATION THAT ROUTINELY EXECUTES KIDNAPPINGS LIKE THIS
AN ORGANIZATION?
THINGS SEEM A BIT STRANGE.
HMM... THE THING I DON'T GET IS WHY THE POLICE DON'T SEEM TO BE DOING ANYTHING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TODAY...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, SENSEI!
UNTIL WE GET THIS BUSINESS STRAIGHTENED OUT, I'LL STAY BY YOUR SIDE AND PROTECT YOU!
OH YEAH!
EH?
NEARLY FORGOT. YOU'RE A BIT STRANGE TOO.


HOW'D YOU PULL IT OFF? ARE YOU A MUTANT OR SOMETHING?
I WAS WONDERING 'BOUT THAT PAPER THING YOU WERE DOING EARLIER. IT SEEMS PRETTY EFFECTIVE AND ALL


IT'S JUST A PARLOR TRICK I LEARNED IN COLLEGE!


I CAN'T HEAR YOU...
ER... UM... EH... WELL...

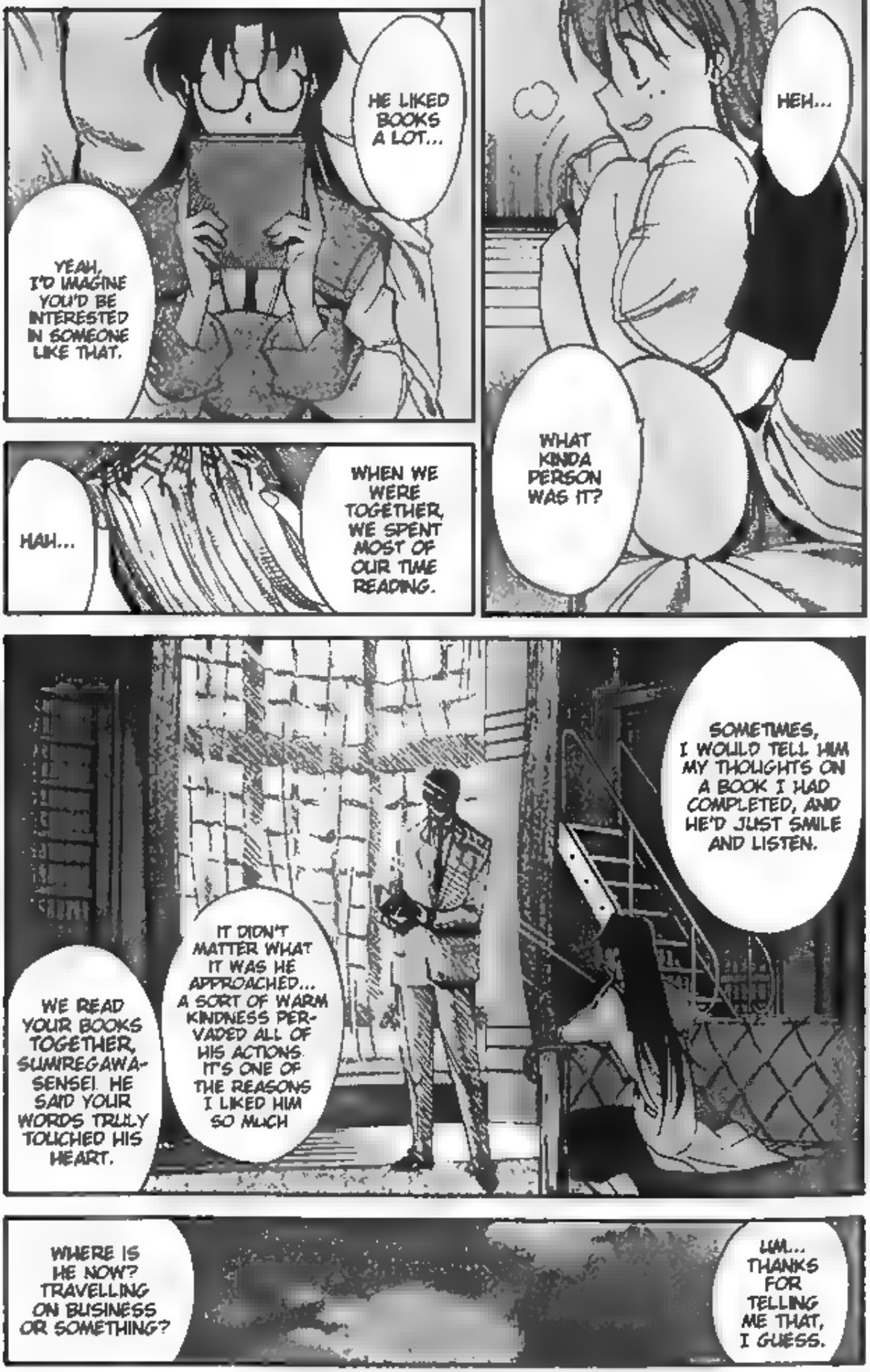

FWENSEI! (SENSEI!) PWEASE WUN WE WAIWLIN! (PLEASE DON'T BE VIOLENT!!) AIN WA HAHIHIST!! (I'M A PACIFIST!!)
OI. YOU THINK YOU CAN BULLSHIT ME THAT EASILY? I'M A FRICKIN' NOVEL AUTHOR, YOU KNOW? BULLSHITTING'S MY JOB!


HN
.....
ACH! HABIB WE! (ACK! FORGIVE ME!)
HAD ENOUGH? JUST BE HONEST WITH ME, AND I'LL END YOUR SUFFERING...


OI, YOU GOT THAT?
PAFF
MOAN
EXPLAIN IT ALL TOMORROW MORNING, 'KAY?
ACK!
WHATEVER. I'M FRICKIN' TIRED OF ALL THE SHIT I'VE HAD TO PUT UP WITH TODAY, SO I'LL LEAVE YOU BE FOR NOW.
UHHH...
'SCUSE ME?


SLEEPING IN YOUR CLOTHES IS FINE, BUT SHOULDN'T YOU AT LEAST TAKE OFF YOUR GLASSES?
NOPE. I SLEEP BETTER LIKE THIS ANYWAYS.
WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU TURN AROUND IN YOUR SLEEP?
WELL ...
I'VE TRAINED MYSELF NOT TO DO THAT. BESIDES...
ER, DOESN'T THE FRAME GET ALL BENT UP AND SHIT?
NO...
THIS THING'S MADE TO BE PRETTY STURDY.
BESIDES WHAT?
I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO TAKE IT OFF. I WANT IT TO STAY WITH ME NO MATTER WHAT.
IT'S THAT IMPORTANT TO YOU?
YES...
YES, IT'S VERY IMPOR-TANT.

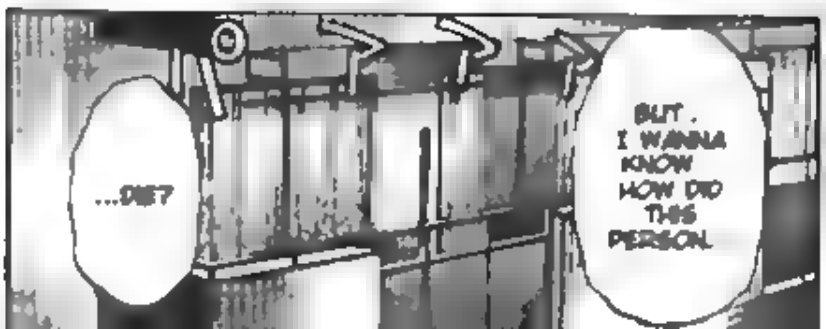

LEMME GUESS
YOU GOT IT FROM SOMEONE SPECIAL?
ONCE UPON A TIME
SOMEONE I REALLY LIKED GAVE IT TO ME AS A PRESENT
YEAH...
YOU'VE GOT A LOVE INTEREST OR SOMETHING!?

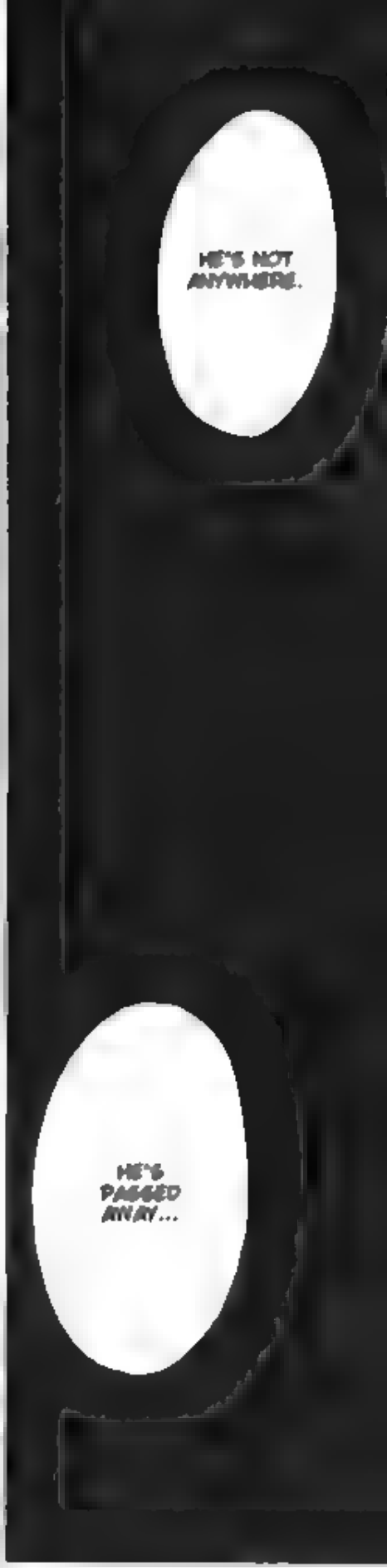

HE LIKED BOOKS A LOT...
YEAH, I'D IMAGINE YOU'D BE INTERESTED IN SOMEONE LIKE THAT.
HEH...
WHAT KINDA PERSON WAS IT?
HAH...
WHEN WE WERE TOGETHER, WE SPENT MOST OF OUR TIME READING.
SOMETIMES, I WOULD TELL HIM MY THOUGHTS ON A BOOK I HAD COMPLETED, AND HE'D JUST SMILE AND LISTEN.
IT DIDN'T MATTER WHAT IT WAS HE APPROACHED... A SORT OF WARM KINDNESS PERVADED ALL OF HIS ACTIONS. IT'S ONE OF THE REASONS I LIKED HIM SO MUCH
WE READ YOUR BOOKS TOGETHER, SUMIREGAWA-SENSEI. HE SAID YOUR WORDS TRULY TOUCHED HIS HEART.
WHERE IS HE NOW? TRAVELLING ON BUSINESS OR SOMETHING?
UM... THANKS FOR TELLING ME THAT, I GUESS.


AFTER YOU DIE.
EH?


THESE GLASSES USED TO BE HIS WHEN I READ HE DOES AS WELL AND WE'RE REUNITED THERE'S JUST SO MANY THINGS I WANT TO SHARE WITH HIM I THINK TO MYSELF EVERYDAY "AND WHERE SHALL WE GO FROM HERE? THE LIBRARY IS VAST AND INFINITE."
YOU CAN'T READ ANY-MORE
CLAS-SICS OF EVERY SORT AND FLAVOR LIKE THE NUM-EROUS GALLE-RIES OF SHEL-VES THAT MAKE UP THE WORLD YOUR NOVELS ARE AMONG THEM
MANY, MANY BOOKS


I'M SORRY .I DIDN'T KNOW...
.....
NO, IT'S OKAY ...


BUT . I WANNA KNOW HOW DID THIS PERSON
...DIE?


HE'S NOT ANYWHERE.
HE'S PASSED AWAY...


THAT'S...
?
!!
SENSEI!!


FEAR LEADS TO ANGER ...
ANGER LEADS TO HATRED...
HATRED OF THE DARKNESS!!


THE BURNING SHALL REDDEN THE BLACK SKIES!!
FIRE RECLAIMS FOR LIFE THAT WHICH THE NIGHT CLAIMS FOR DEATH!!
THE DARKNESS IS TO BE ILLUMI-NATED!!


THIS IS MY CALLING... DO, OR DO NOT! FOR IN THIS TASK, THERE IS NO TRYING. I SHALL NOT FAIL IN THIS CRUSADE!
KYA HAH HAH HAH HAA!


WHAT'S THIS?
THE FLAMES DANCE WITHIN THE RECESSES OF MY SOUL.
HA HA HA..
A CO-COON OF PAPER...

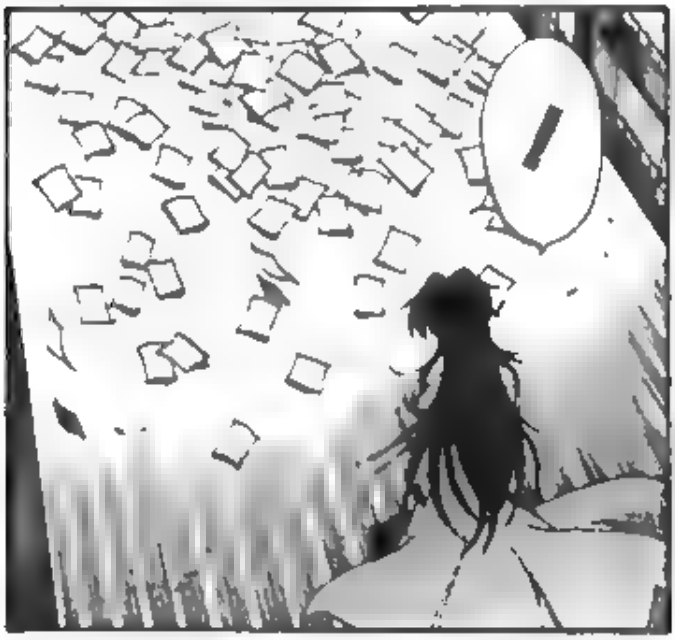

BURN, MY FLAMES! BURN!
HER WITS ARE QUICKER THAN EXPECTED, I SEE. ABLE TO DEFLECT THE BRUNT OF MY ATTACK? SHE IS FITTING OF HER TITLE, *THE PAPER*...
BUT JUST AS PAPER CAN NOT CONTAIN FIRE, THE UPHOLDERS LIGHT AND LIFE SHALL EARN THE VICTORY THEY ARE DUE OVER THOSE WHO OPPOSE THEM. HEAVENLY JUSTICE IS FAIR. THIS LESSON I SHALL TEACH YOU: YOU MUST UNLEARN WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

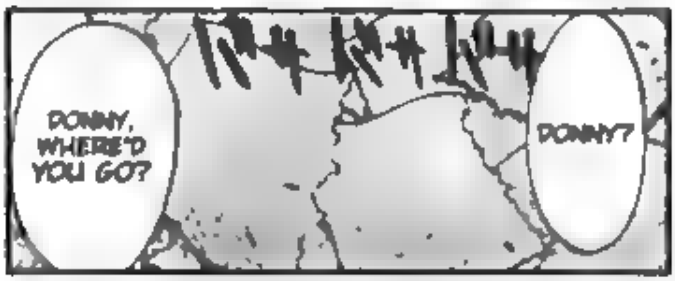

BWA HAH HAH HAH HAH HAA!


DONNY!
DONNY?
LOOK!
HAVE YOU READ THIS BOOK?
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU'D BE IN THE LIBRARY ...
SHE'S REALLY, REALLY GOOD!
DIDN'T REALIZE UNTIL I LOOKED AT THE AUTHOR BIO, BUT THE WRITER'S ONLY A 13-YEAR-OLD GIRL!
IT'S LIKE REALLY WELL-DONE!

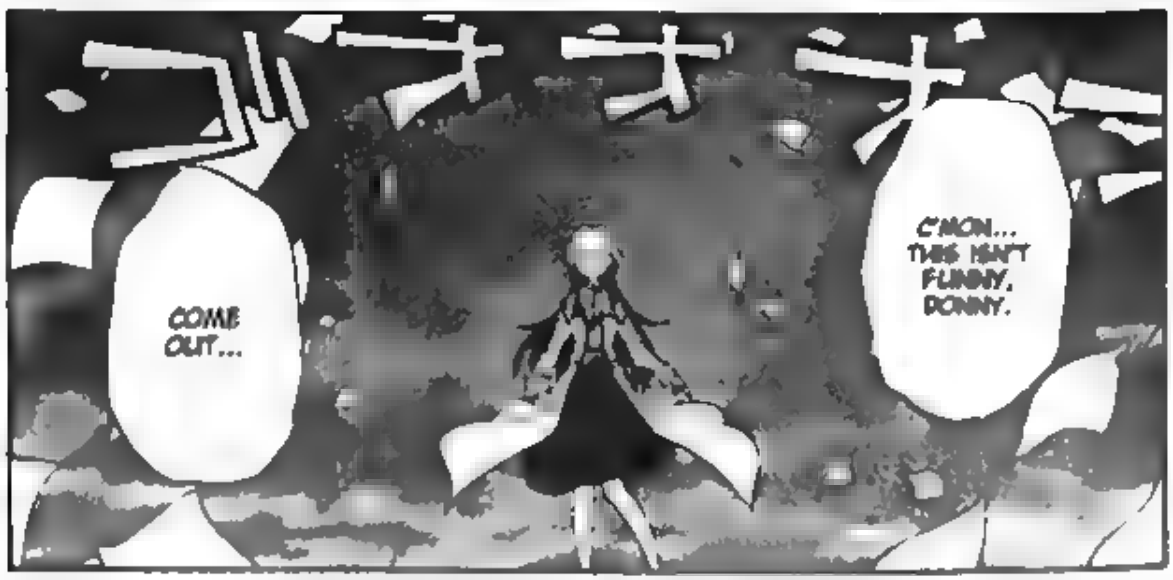

HMM... I WONDER WHAT KIND OF GIRL SHE IS?
I REALLY WANT TO MEET HER.
FROM THE WAY IT'S WRITTEN, THERE'S LIKE NO WAY YOU CAN TELL IT'S THIS GIRL'S FIRST BOOK!
I THINK I HAVE BECOME A FAN ALREADY!
.....
.....
DONNY? ARE YOU LISTE-NING?
DONNY!
你心知我心
YOU'VE READ IT TOO?
HMM?


DO YOU, DONNY?

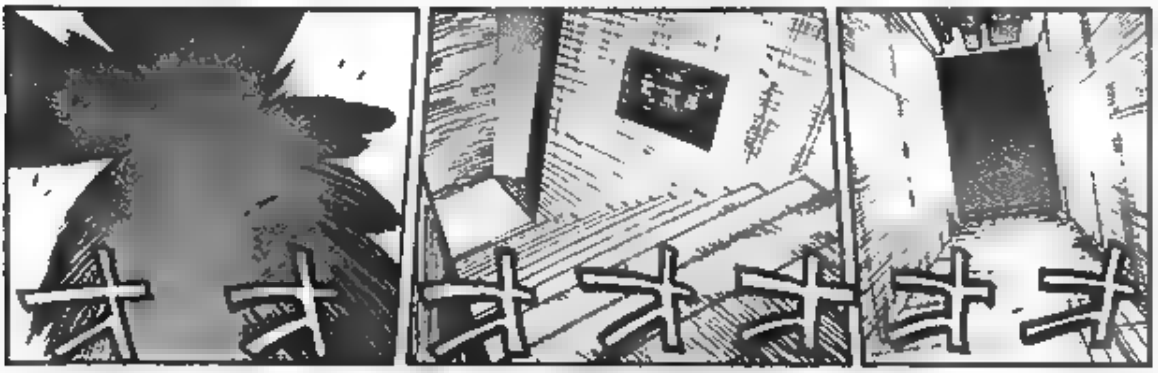

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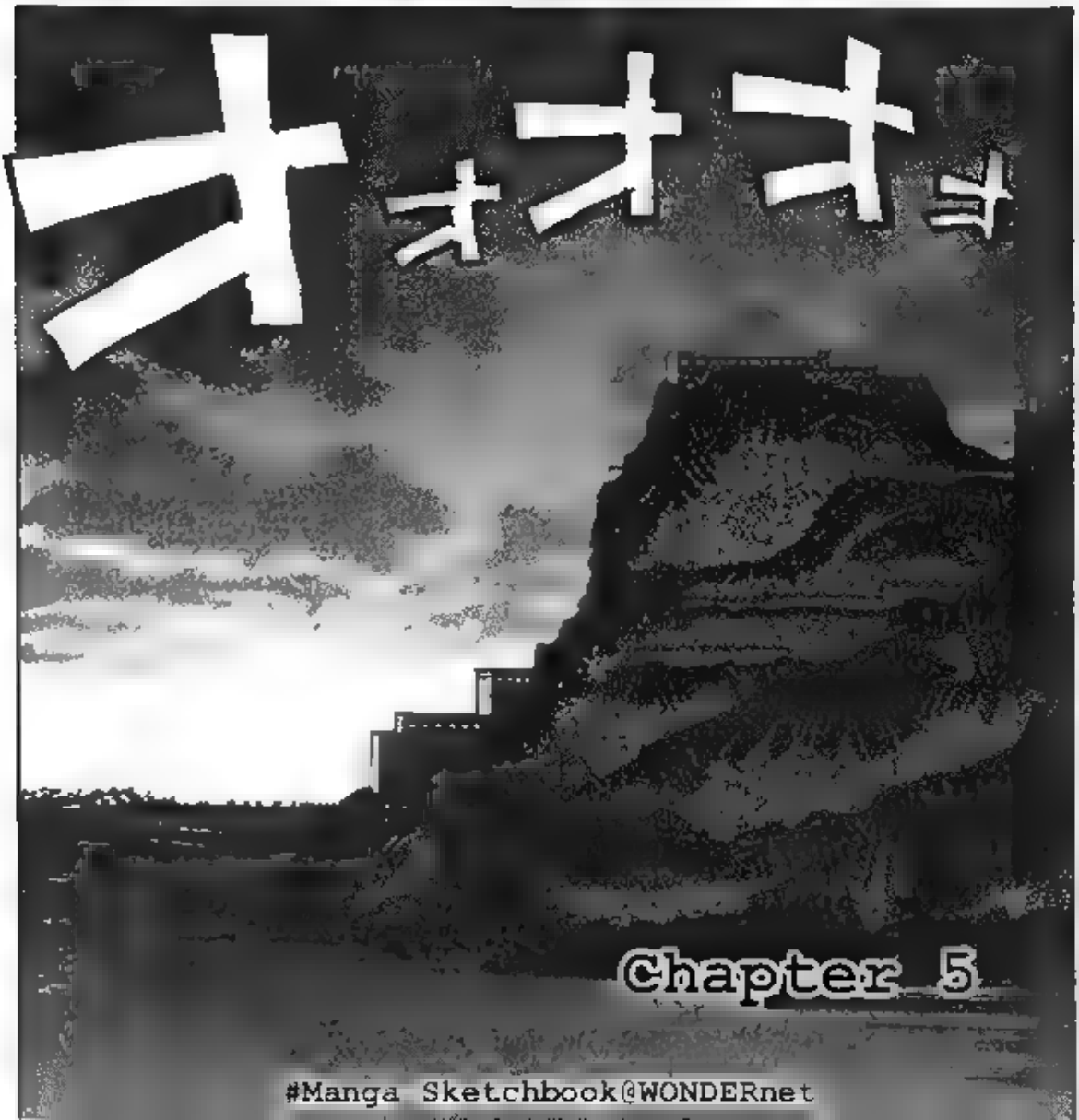

DONNY, WHERE'D YOU GO?
DONNY?


WHEN I GET BACK TO JAPAN, I'M GONNA GO GET HER AUTOGRAPH.
I'LL GET ONE FOR YOU TOO IF YOU WANT IT.


COME OUT...
C'MON... THIS ISN'T FUNNY, DONNY.


DONNY!




Chapter 5
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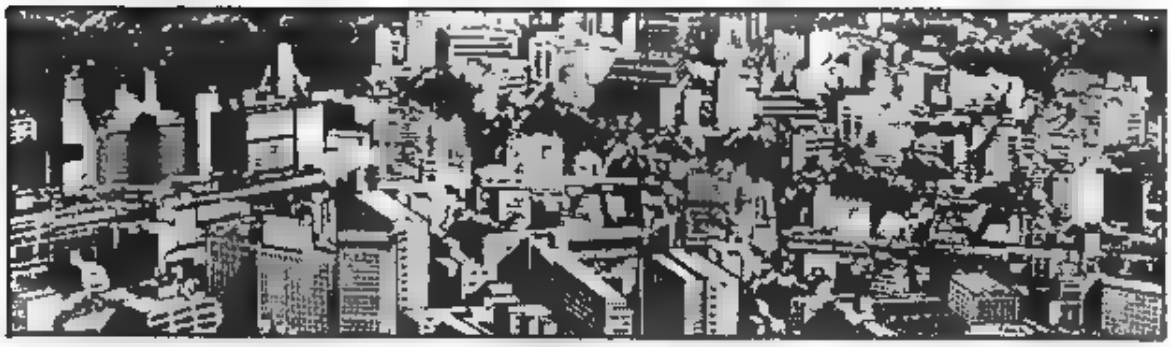

WAIT... HANDCUFFS !?
COME TO THINK OF IT.
I DON'T RECOGNIZE THIS PLACE. WHERE AM I?


...?
WAS IT JUST A DREAM ?

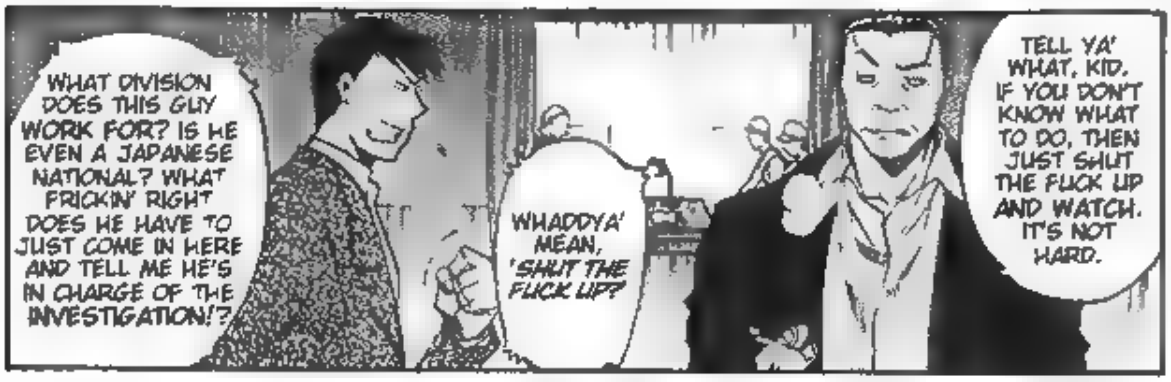

WELCOME TO THE CEMETERY OF THE BOOKS, DEAR.


YOU'RE RATHER ATTRACTIVE WHEN YOU'RE ASLEEP
DIDN'T REALIZE IT WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU ..


CAN YOU ESCAPE THE FLIGHT OF HER WINGS? THE PAPER?
IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME, THOUGH. COME YOUR NEXT VISIT FROM THE LORD OF THE DREAMING HE'LL LIKELY BE ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SISTER, THE LADY MORTIFER.

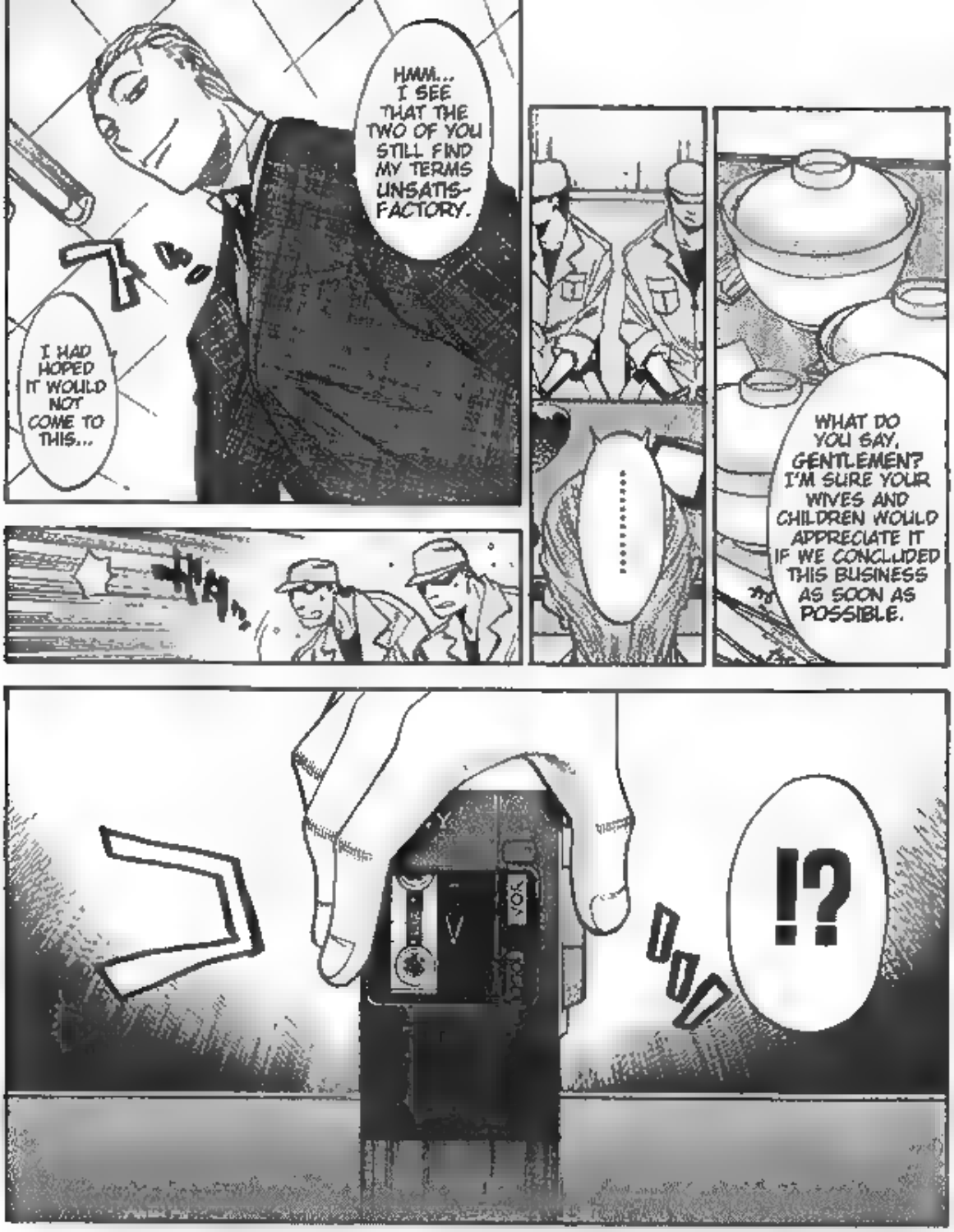


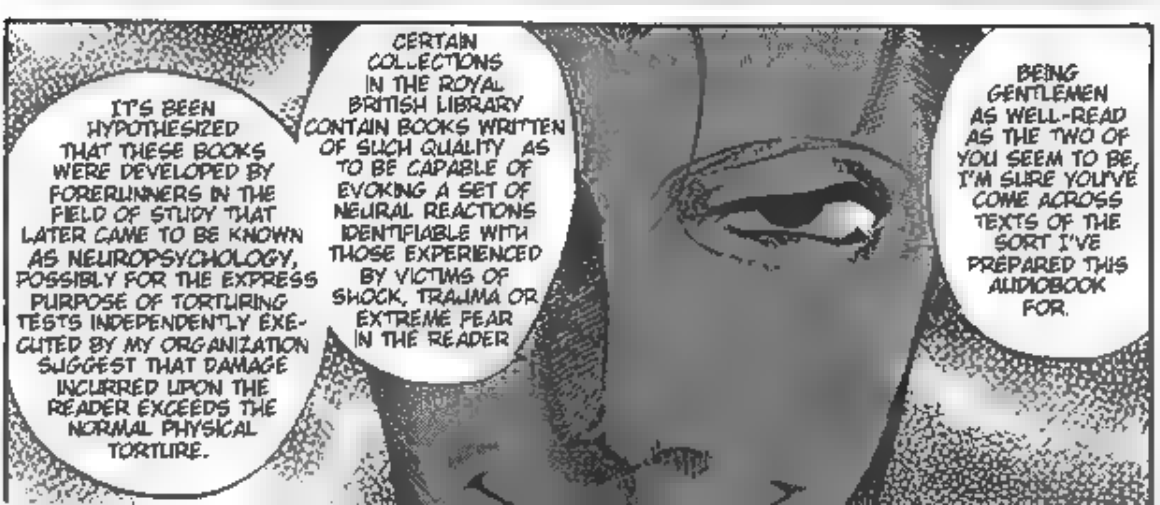

THESE GUYS COME IN, AND WE CAN'T GET A SINGLE WORD OUTTA' THEM! WE CHECK 'EM UP WITH NPA, AND YOU KNOW WHAT? THEY DON'T EXIST! NO FUCKING PRINTS ON FILE! AS FAR AS WE KNOW, THEY'VE NEVER EVEN TAKEN PICTURES FOR GOVERNMENT-ISSUED ID! THEY AIN'T NORMAL!
YEAH, KID?
I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!!

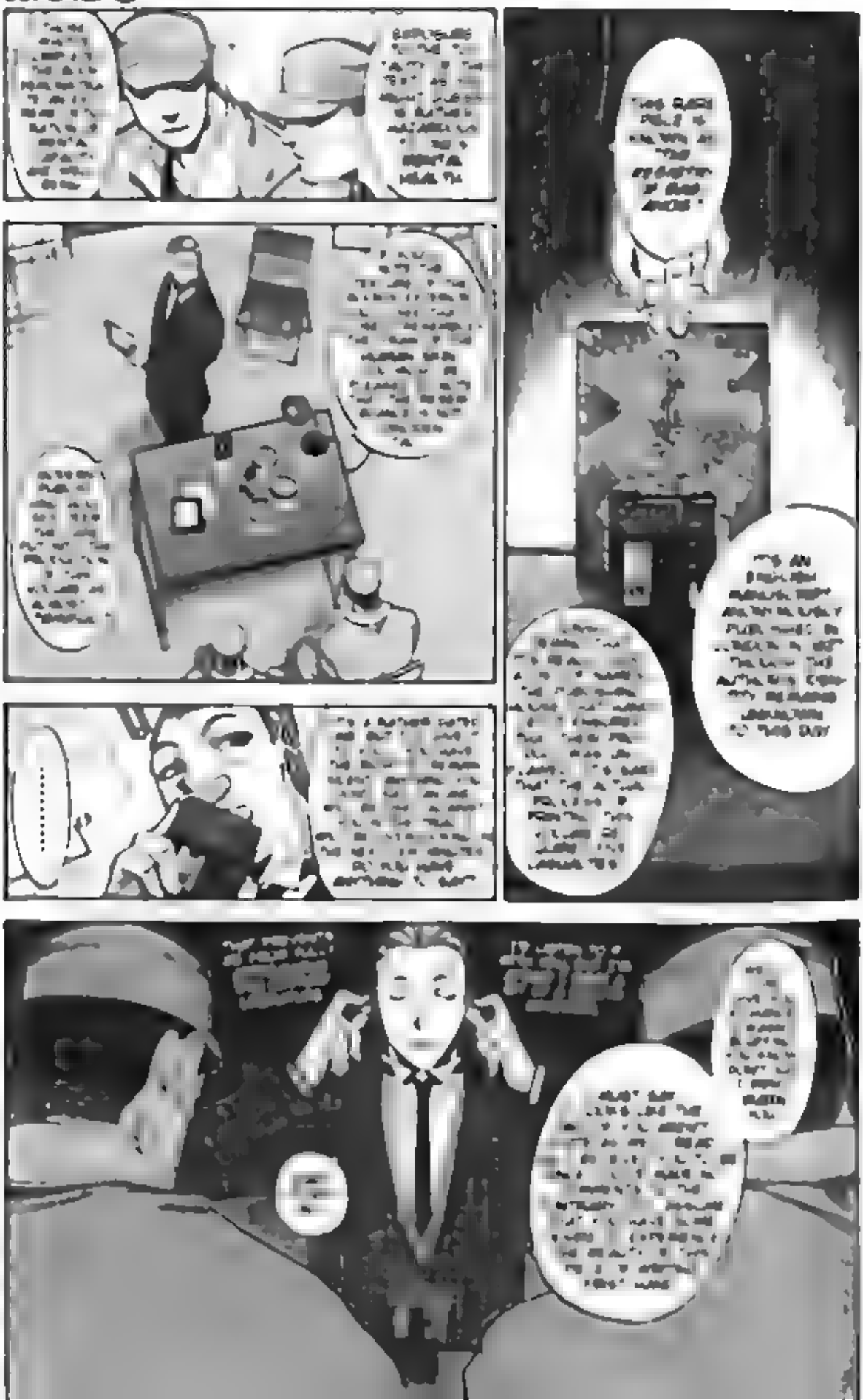

WHAT DIVISION DOES THIS GUY WORK FOR? IS HE EVEN A JAPANESE NATIONAL? WHAT FRICKIN' RIGHT DOES HE HAVE TO JUST COME IN HERE AND TELL ME HE'S IN CHARGE OF THE INVESTIGATION!?
WHADDYA' MEAN, 'SHUT THE FUCK UP?
TELL YA' WHAT, KID. IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, THEN JUST SHUT THE FUCK UP AND WATCH. IT'S NOT HARD.


HE'S BETTER QUALIFIED THAN YOU OR ME. THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
KID, LISTEN. THE FACT IS THAT WE DON'T KNOW WHO THE HELL WE'RE DEALIN' WITH. YOU TOLD ME YOURSELF THAT THE NPA DOESN'T KNOW. THAT'S THE REASON WE BROUGHT THIS GUY IN


TELL ME, WHO ARE YOU, REALLY?
I DON'T THINK IT'D BE COURTEOUS OF ME TO KEEP YOU TOO LONG, GENTLEMEN. I'LL TRY TO JUST GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.
OH, YES. NEARLY FORGOT ABOUT THAT.
I'D READ THAT IN JAPAN, THE POLICE HAVE A CUSTOM OF PROVIDING A ROOM SERVICE DURING INTERROGATIONS LIKE THIS. I'M GONNA TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT NOW. WOULD YOU GENTLEMEN LIKE SOME REFRESHMENTS? YES?
APPARENTLY, SHE'S DECIDED TO PLAY HOOKEY. I SWEAR, THESE YOUNG PART-TIME WORKERS WE'VE HIRED GIVE ME A HEADACHE. WEAK, WEAK WORK ETHIC. IT LEADS ME TO QUESTION THE SCHOOLS NOWADAYS.
I WAS INFORMED BY A RELIABLE SOURCE THAT THE TERMS OUR REPRESENTATIVE ARRANGED WITH YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN A TAD BIT UNREASONABLE.
I'M HERE BECAUSE MY SUPERVISOR SUGGESTED THAT I SHOULD ATTEMPT TO APOLOGIZE. YOU. ORIGINALLY, I HAD PLANNED ON HAVING HER GIVE YOU A FORMAL APOLOGY, BUT OUR PERSONNEL ARE HAVING PROBLEMS CONTACTING HER.
OI!! ORDER TWO MORE!!
EXCUSE ME, ROOM SERVICE? I'D LIKE THREE BOWLS OF FRIED PORK AND RICE FOR MY GUESTS AND ME, PLEASE. EXTRA TOPPINGS ON ALL OF THEM.

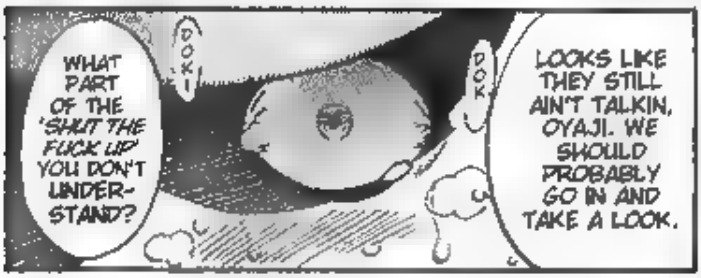

HMM... I SEE THAT THE TWO OF YOU STILL FIND MY TERMS UNSATISFACTORY.
I HAD HOPED IT WOULD NOT COME TO THIS...
.....
WHAT DO YOU SAY, GENTLEMEN? I'M SURE YOUR WIVES AND CHILDREN WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF WE CONCLUDED THIS BUSINESS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
!?

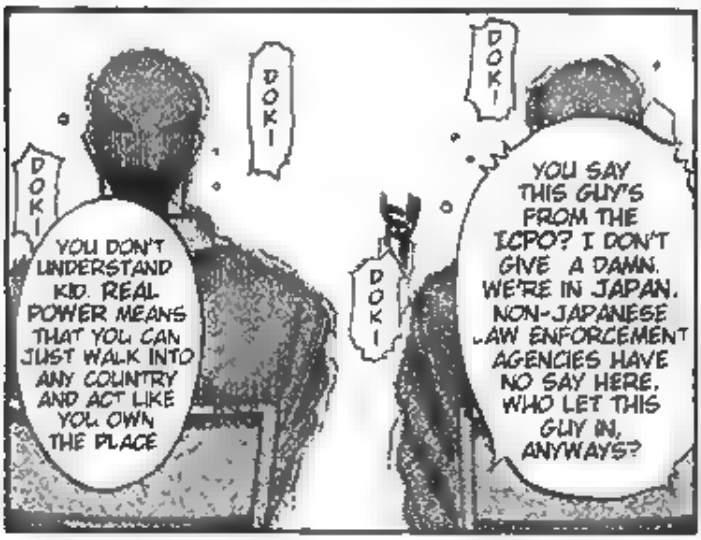

IT'S BEEN HYPOTHESIZED THAT THESE BOOKS WERE DEVELOPED BY FORERUNNERS IN THE FIELD OF STUDY THAT LATER CAME TO BE KNOWN AS NEUROPSYCHOLOGY, POSSIBLY FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF TORTURING TESTS INDEPENDENTLY EXECUTED BY MY ORGANIZATION SUGGEST THAT DAMAGE INCURRED UPON THE READER EXCEEDS THE NORMAL PHYSICAL TORTURE.
CERTAIN COLLECTIONS IN THE ROYAL BRITISH LIBRARY CONTAIN BOOKS WRITTEN OF SUCH QUALITY AS TO BE CAPABLE OF EVOKING A SET OF NEURAL REACTIONS IDENTIFIABLE WITH THOSE EXPERIENCED BY VICTIMS OF SHOCK, TRAUMA OR EXTREME FEAR IN THE READER
BEING GENTLEMEN AS WELL-READ AS THE TWO OF YOU SEEM TO BE, I'M SURE YOU'VE COME ACROSS TEXTS OF THE SORT I'VE PREPARED THIS AUDIOBOOK FOR.

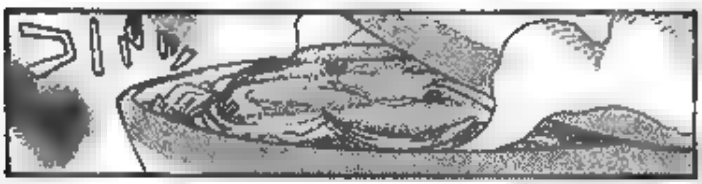



FINAL CHANCE... NOT SPEAKING?




WHAT PART OF THE 'SHUT THE FUCK UP' YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND?
DOKI
DOK
LOOKS LIKE THEY STILL AIN'T TALKIN, OYAJI. WE SHOULD PROBABLY GO IN AND TAKE A LOOK.


DOKI
DOKI
DOKI
DOKI
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND KID. REAL POWER MEANS THAT YOU CAN JUST WALK INTO ANY COUNTRY AND ACT LIKE YOU OWN THE PLACE
YOU SAY THIS GUY'S FROM THE ICPO? I DON'T GIVE A DAMN. WE'RE IN JAPAN. NON-JAPANESE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES HAVE NO SAY HERE. WHO LET THIS GUY IN, ANYWAYS?

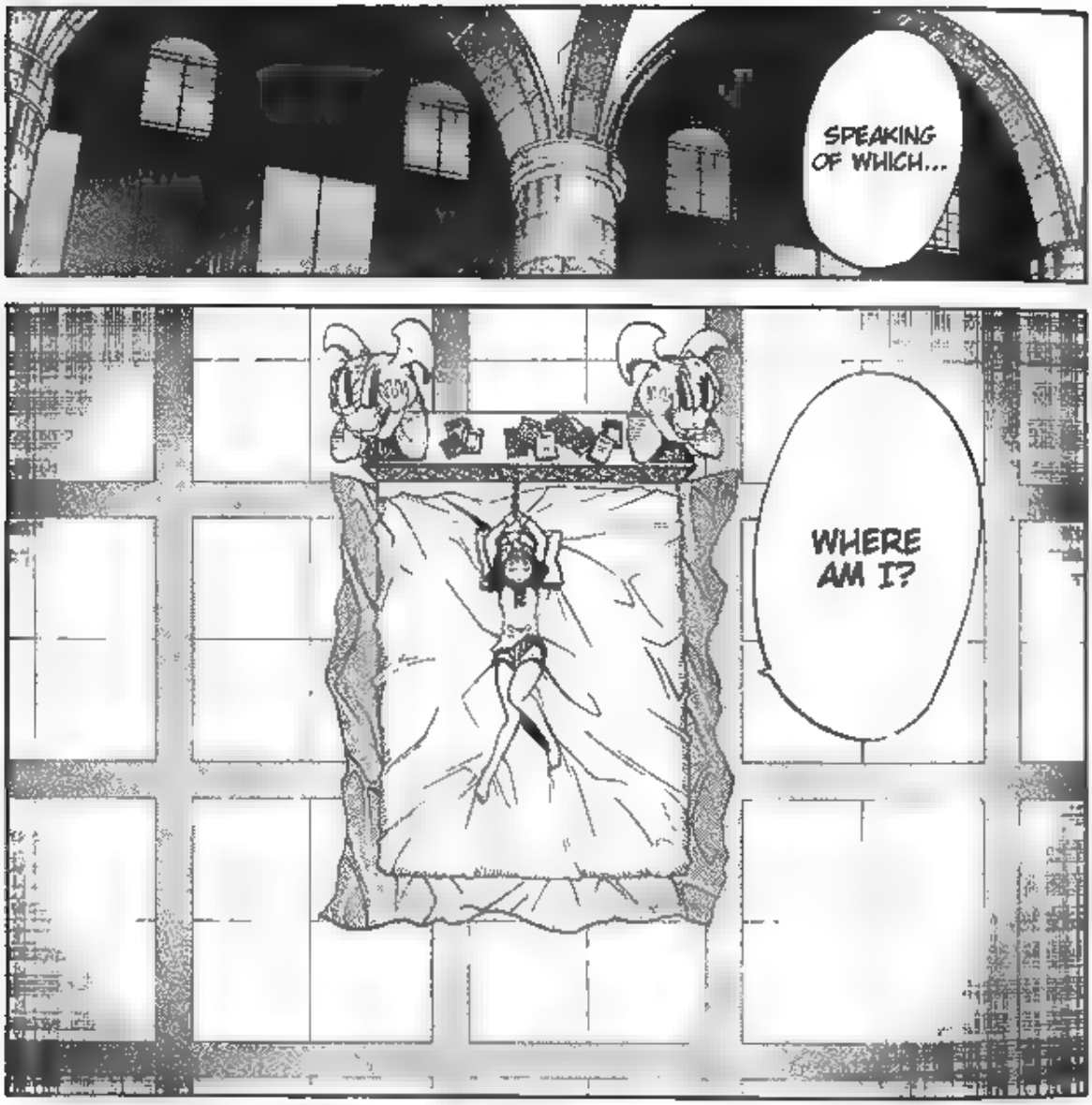



HUH?
THE GUY LOOKS LIKE A WUSS. WHAT THE HELL CAN HE DO THAT I CAN'T?


VOR
NO? THAT'S JUST TOO BAD, THEN. I SUPPOSE I'M KEEPING YOU FROM ENJOYING THIS WONDERFUL TAPE. WITHOUT FURTHER ADO I'M RETURNING YOU TO YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAM-MING.
WELCOME YET AGAIN TO THE ROYAL BRITISH LIBRARY'S COLLECTION OF RESTRICTED-ACCESS AUDIOBOOKS. TODAY WE'RE GOING TO BE EXAMINING MATERIAL THAT REPRESENTS A POSSIBLE PINNACLE OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION THE UNITED KINGDOM'S "CULTURAL WEAPONRY."


GO GET THE KEYS!
WE HAFTA STOP THIS GUY!
WHAT THE FUCK!?
WHAT'D HE DO!?
WHAT THE HELL IS GOIN' ON IN THERE!?
SHIT, IT'S LOCKED FROM THE INSIDE!!
OPEN IT! OPEN THE FRICKIN' DOOR!
QUICKLY!

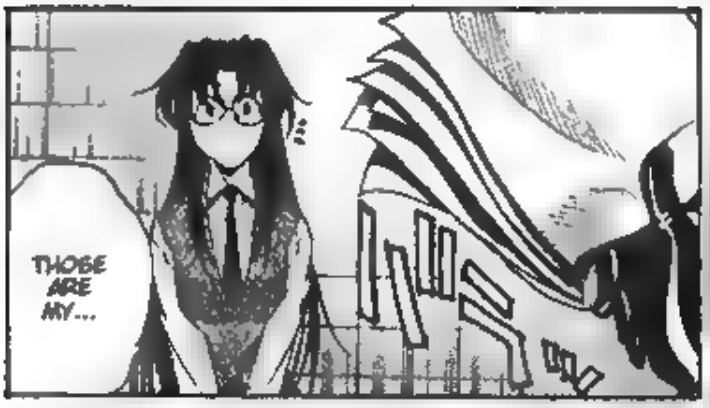

SHIT!
MY FILES ARE BURNING UP!
IS MY DEADLINE BURNING AWAY TOO!?
BURN! BURN THE EVIL DEADLINE TO ASHES!
-SIGH-
...THAT WAS A DREAM, RIGHT?
I KNEW IT THINGS WERE GETTING TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE...
BLEH.. TOO BAD IT ONLY GOT UP TO THE POINT WHERE MY FILES WERE BEING BURNT. IF IT'D ONLY CONTINUED...
DAMNIT! WHY THE HELL IS THIS BED SO HARD? DIDN'T I GO TO SLEEP ON MY COUCH...
AH?
-CLINK-
UM...
WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?


SPEAKING OF WHICH...
WHERE AM I?


SOMEBODY COME PINCH ME OR SOMETHING! I WANNA WAKE UP!
I'M STILL DREAMING? YEAH, THAT'S GOTTA BE IT.
MAYBE ...


W-WHO ARE YOU?
"YOU NEEDN'T GO SO FAR TO PLEASE ME," I SAID TO HER. "I AM CONTENT."
"SHE MADE NO ACTION BUT TO SMILE AND SOFTLY PROMISE TO REMAIN AT MY SIDE IN THE FACE OF ANY DIFFICULTY I MIGHT ENCOUNTER."
"HER RADIANCE MELTED AWAY THE UNEASE THAT HAD FROZEN IN THE CORE OF MY HEART..."
"NO MATTER THE CHANGES THAT SWEEP THE LANDS AS THE SEASONS PASS, YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE DEPTHS OF MY BEING CHANGES NOT."
YOU'RE THE GUY WHO SENT THE KIDNAPPERS!?


SU-SUMI-REGAWA-SENSEI! WHERE IS SHE!?
PRESUMING TO QUESTION YOUR KEEPER? MY AREN'T YOU PRETEN-TIOUS...
YOU HAVE NO NEED TO WORRY, DEAR.
LAST I SAW HER, SHE WAS SLEE-PING PEACE-FULLY AND UNHARMED. IT SEEMS THAT FOR HER ARRIVAL, MY EMPLOYER HAS ARRANGED A GRAND...
...
"SALU-TATION."
FROM YOUR EXPRESSION, I SUPPOSE YOU WERE EXPECTING SOMETHING MORE VULGAR IN NA-TURE.
WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE?
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM SENSEI?
DON'T MISUNDER-STAND ME, DEAR I WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH HER IT'S SIMPLY THAT I'M LISTED ON HIS PAYROLL, SO I'M GOING TO REFRAIN FROM COMMENTING UPON HIS RATHER PECULIAR LIBIDO EVERYONE'S ALLO-WED TO HAVE THEIR QU-IRKS
BOOKS AND AUTHORS FAIL TO INTEREST ME IN THE LEAST.
THEN WHO ARE YOU?


THOSE ARE MY...


I MUST SAY, THIS PAPER'S OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY I'VE EVER SEEN
SOFT SUPPLE YET FIRM. I WOULD'VE EXPECTED NO LESS OF YOUR EMPLOYER THAN FOR THEM TO PROVIDE YOU WITH EQUIPMENT OF SUCH HIGH CALIBUR, PAPER MASTER.




UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, ALL THINGS THAT STAND IN THE WAY OF THE PATH THAT I'M COMMITTED TO BURN ARE FATED TO TRAVEL THE ROAD OF THE DUSTS. YOUR PAPER IS NO DIFFERENT


IN FEI YEN!
WE'RE NOT SO DIFFERENT, YOU AND I... WE WHO POSSESS COMMAND OF POWERS BEYOND THE UNDERSTANDING OF LESSER MORTALS SHARE A COMMON ESTRANGEMENT FROM THE MASSES.


SUCH IS WHAT I CONTROL...
"FIRE!"
THAT WHICH CONSUMES ALL AND GRANTS IT REBIRTH...THE EMBODIMENT OF LIGHT!
YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY TO DESTRUCTION. YOU HAVE NO CHANCE TO SURVIVE. MAKE GOOD USE OF THE TIME YOU HAVE LEFT...
DO YOU UNDERSTAND, PAPER MASTER?


I UNDERSTAND THE BURNING IN YOUR HEART
I UNDERSTAND YOUR PAIN.
MY MY PAPER
IN THE MANNER THAT THE CENTER OF YOUR PSYCHE IS ENGRAINED WITH A DEEP AND PROFOUND LOVE OF BOOKS, SO IS MINE WITH THE EVER-ENCIRCLING FLAMES OF REBIRTH!
THAT IS WHY I UNDERSTAND.




REMEMBER THE FIRES OF ALEXANDRIA... THE TEXTS OF AN ENTIRE MILLENIA, LOST IN A MOMENT OF FLAME.
!!


...THE PATH TO BE BURNED IS NOT WIDE ENOUGH FOR THE BOTH OF US.
THOUGH THE CROSSES WE BEAR ARE SIMILAR ENOUGH TO HAVE BEEN CRAFTED BY THE SAME HAND...


I ANTICIPATE THE AROMA OF YOUR BURNING FLESH...
YOUR SKIN IS TENDER AND PLEASANT-SMELLING...


YOU ASKED OF MY EMPLOYER'S IDENTITY EARLIER? IF YOU TRULY WISH TO KNOW,
I HAVE SOME OTHER BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF RIGHT NOW, BUT BEFORE I GO
ONCE PERMISSION IS RECIEVED TO COMMENCE YOUR EXECUTION,
SUFFICE TO SAY THAT HE'S A BIBLIOMANIAC MUCH LIKE YOURSELF, BUT OF A SOMEWHAT LOWER GRADE.
THOUGH HE'S OF COMMON BREED AND OF LITTLE INTEREST TO ME, MONEY AND POWER ARE TWO THINGS HE DOES NOT LACK...
WE SHALL DANCE .. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOUR DEATH SHALL NOT BE FOR NAUGHT, FOR I SHALL APPRECIATE IT IMMENSELY


LIKE ME?
A BIBLIOMANIAC?


HMM?
I SHOULD HAVE HIDDEN MY PAPER BETTER. IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE TAKEN AWAY ALL MY EQUIPMENT...
-GRUNT-
-MOAN-
-HAA-
-MOAN-
OH, DEAR. I CAN'T STICK AROUND HERE FOR MUCH LONGER
I BETTER GO SAVE SENSEI...


ME? THEY CALL ME THE BIBLIO-MANIAC.
AS TO WHY I HAD MY SERVANTS ESCORT YOU HERE LET'S JUST SAY THAT I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THE WORTH OF GOOD LITERATURE CAN BE MEASURED IN SOMETHING AS LOWLY AS GOLD. YOU, CHILD, ARE INFINITELY MORE MORE VALUABLE TO ME
IN CASE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND MY INTENTIONS, I'LL EXPLAIN. BIBLIOMANIACS COULD BE REFERRED TO AS "ALCHEMISTS OF THE SPIRIT."
THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE I REQUIRE TO COMPLETE THE LORD'S DIVINE WORK CAN BE FOUND IN THE WORLD YOU CONSTRUCT IN YOUR FICTION, SUMIREGAWA NENENE...


MY NAME IS MARIHARA.
MARIHARA KAZUMI.
I'VE BEEN GRANTED THE TASK OF POLISHING THE PERFECTION OF YOUR WRITING UNTIL YOU REACH THE STATE OF TRUE DIVINITY BY A FORCE THAT I CANNOT YET FULLY COMPREHEND!
AFTER REVIEWING YOUR WORK MANY TIMES, I'VE COME TO A SINGLE CONCLUSION.
YOU, SUMIRE-GAWA-SENSEI, ARE THE HERMAPHRODITIC UNION OF THE SAGE AND THE MAIDEN. YOU ARE PERFECT.
YES, MY LITTLE PAUL SHELDON ...
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS DAY FOR A LONG TIME..


I'M YOUR MOST LOYAL FAN!!


DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE BOSS SAYING ALL THAT CRAP ABOUT HOW THIS GIRL'S LIKE SOME SORTA MUTANT? SHE'S DEVELOPED THE MEN ABILITY TO CONTROL PAPER OR SOME THIN
A PAPER MASTER?
.....
THE PAPER MASTER...
WELL, HE SAID WE HAD FIRE-GIRL REMOVE ALL THE BITCH'S PAPER SHOULDN'T BE ANYTHING WRONG WITH HAVIN' A BIT OF FUN WITH HER
WERE YOU LISTENING AT ALL AT THE BRIEFING, VICKS? THE BOSS SAID THAT THE GIRL'S CAPABLE OF SLICING THROUGH A FOOT-THICK PIECE OF STEEL WITH HALF A PIECE OF TISSUE PAPER.
PAPER?
.....
YOU AIN'T SERIOUS, ARE YOU? IS THIS REALLY SAFE!?
THAT BITCH FRICKIN' ESCAPED!
SHIT, THAT BITCH...



Chapter 6

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I SWEAR, I'M GONNA SCREAM!

DON'T COME ANY CLOSER, YOU PER-VERT!

LET NOT THINE ANGER BURN AGAINST THY SERVANT, YOUNG MISTRESS...

I BESEECH YOU, MS. PAUL SHELDON.

WHAT THE HELL IS IT THAT YOU WANT FROM ME!?

LIKE, I'M JUST A NORMAL GIRL! THERE'S NO FRICKIN' WAY I COULD DO ANY OF THAT SHIT YOU JUST PULLED ON ME!

?

YOUR COMPLETION WORKS IN THE INTEREST OF THE DEFENSE OF CIVILIZATION.

IN THE ETERNITY THAT HAS PASSED SINCE THE BIRTH OF THE ENTITY KNOWN AS THE HUMAN CULTURE, THE WRITTEN WORD HAS GAINED THE REPUTATION OF BEING THE LONGEST LASTING AND MOST POWERFUL OF ITS EXPRESSIVE MEDIUMS.

IT ISN'T A DIFFICULT CONCEPT TO UNDER-STAND...

I ASK YOU...

DOES THERE EXIST ANYTHING BESIDES THAT MIGHT PROVOKE HUMANITY TO SUCH OBSESSIVE LOYALTY? THE POOL OF SILOAM HAS GIVEN ME SIGHT OF THIS *TRUTH!*

THE MASSES ARE BLINDED BY THE TAINTED OPIATES OF THE FLESH AND GROPE UNSEEING AT EMPTY PLEASURES IN THE LIGHT OF THE NOONDAY SUN.

THE WORTH OF THE WORD REMAINS JUST BEYOND THEIR REACH...

BUT, ALAS...

...SUCH A SENTIMENT IS UNDERSTOOD BY I *ALONE.*

GAMB-LING!

INTER-NET!

VIO-LENCE!

SEX!

DRUGS!

PREOCCUPATION WITH THESE OBJECTS OF BASE FETISH HAS AFFLICTED HUMANITY WITH AN ILLITERACY BORNE OF THE MENTAL DECAY OF THE CULTURE!

DO THE MISGUIDED LAMBS BEYOND MY FENCES NOT LIKE PIGS AND THE PIG MASTER BELIEVE THEY HAVE ALLOWED TO BE AMONGST THEM IT DOES LOSS IN THE SOULS!

IT IS THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ELEMENTS THAT CONSTITUTE CIVILIZATION AS WE KNOW IT THE END OF THE ART!

IF THIS DISEASE TRIUMPHS AND THE MIND OF THE INDIVIDUAL IS DESTROYED WE ARE LOST! THE FLESH AND OF THIS INDIVIDUAL WILL HAVE WORN AND SAMUEL'S LIFELESS SHELL WILL CONFRONT US TO THE DARKNESS OF BARBARISM!

THE BOOK'S CONCEPTION WILL BE IMMACULATE, AS MIGHT BE GIVEN UNTO US BY A MIRACLE OF THE WORD!

WE THE UNWORTHY WILL SEE WHERE WE HAVE SINNED, AND WE SHALL PROSTRATE OURSELVES BEFORE YOUR HOLINESS, DIVINE HERMAPHRODITE ...

AT THE SAME TIME, IT MUST HOLD WITHIN IT THE ESSENCE OF PURE, UNSULLIED ART... THAT WILL BE THE MEASURE OF ITS LIMITLESS WORTH ...

IT SHOULD HOLD A CERTAIN QUALITY THAT RENDERS IT ACCESSIBLE TO POPULAR CULTURE AND THE MAJORITY OF SOCIETY...

TO PROTECT THE WORLD FROM DEVASTATION...TO UNITE ALL PEOPLE AMONGST THE NATIONS.

I'VE FOUND NEED OF A WORK THAT TRANSCENDS ALL OTHER OBSESSIONS .. A MASTERPIECE!

ONLY YOU CAN SAVE THE MANKIND!

WHEN I AM DONE, LEAD SHALL BE AS GOLD, AND NO LONGER WILL YOU SIMPLY BE THE LONGING MAIDEN. THE SAGE SHALL GROW FROM THE OPENING OF YOUR WOMB, AND YOUR TALENT WILL BE UNVEILED

YOU'VE GOT THE GIFT, CHILD, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE WAITING FOR SOMETHING... I SHALL GIVE YOU WHAT YOU DESIRE.

YOU HAVE NOT YET REACHED THE STATE OF TRUE HERMAPHRODITISM.

THE PROCESS OF PURIFICATION HAS YET TO BE COMPLETED, OF COURSE.

BEHOLD!

I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU FOR A LONG TIME...

I UNDER-STAND YOU...

WH-WHAT THE FUCK ARE YA TALKIN' TO YOURSELF ABOUT!? ARE YOU PSYCHOTIC OR SOME-THING!?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ME, ANYWAYS!? DO YOU EVEN UNDERSTAND ME!?

!!

NOT ONLY THAT..

THESE BOOKS.. THEY'RE ALL YOURS.

SO TO CONSIGN THE WORLDS YOU BUILD FOREVER TO MEMORY, I HAVE CARVED THE MOST MEMORABLE OF YOUR PASSAGES INTO MY FLESH AND SOUL.

THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUR EMOTIONS IS UNITED WITH MY SKIN. IN THE MANNER THAT JOHN ENVISIONED THE GENESIS. SO I OBSERVE THE BIRTH OF YOUR WORLD IN THE DEPTHS OF MY SOUL. "IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD."

Y-YOU ...

YOU'RE COMPLETELY NUTS!

YOUR WORDS .. THEY HAVE BEEN RENDERED A PART OF MY BEING!

!!

YOU SPEAK THE TRUTH, MAIDEN.

I HAVE BEEN ENSLAVED BY MY LOVE OF BOOKS!

MY LOVE FOR THE WRITTEN WORD COMPOUNDS MY LOVE FOR YOU, AND SO I HAVE BEEN DRIVEN TO THE MADNESS OF THOSE TOUCHED BY DIVINITY!

SEVENTY THOUSAND TO SHANGHAI! BET YOUR ASSES ON IT, GENTLEMEN! WE HAVE ORDERS TO FILL!

FIFTY THOUSAND COPIES OF THE FIRST EDITION TO HONG KONG!

FINISH LOADING THE CARGO, CIRCUIT ONE! I WANT THE REST OF YOU GENTLEMEN AT YOUR STATIONS! RELAY THAT DOWN TO THREE AND FOUR, MR VICKS!

THE WOMAN'S PROBABLY HEADED TOWARD THE BOSS' QUARTERS IN THE HEXAGONE CRAMOISI!

PREVENT HER FROM LEAVING THE HAUTE GALERIE CIRCULAIRE AT ALL COSTS! UNDERSTAND ME?

YO WE GOT A SECURITY PROBLEM DOWN IN THE CELLS! WEDGE FROM CIRCUIT THREE SAYS THE WOMAN WE BROUGHT BACK IS OUTTA CONTAINMENT!

FINISH LOADING THE CARGO, CIRCUIT ONE! I WANT THE REST OF YOU GENTLEMEN AT YOUR STATIONS, *ASAP!* RELAY THAT DOWN TO THREE AND FOUR, MR. VICKS!

FRICKIN' CRAP! SHE'S ALREADY HERE!!

SHIT!

AYE, SIR!


TARGET APPROACHING CENTER GALLERY!!

AARGH!

!?

FOR THAT FROM WHICH YOU GAIN YOUR GREATEST STRENGTH, YOU DEMONSTRATE GREAT WEAKNESS. DEAR GIRL. SO DISGUSTINGLY NAIVE YOU ARE, I SHOULD KILL YOU WHERE YOU STAND..

!ΔΔΔ


THE TONGUES OF MY ENVY SALIVATE FOR YOUR FLESH...


DO NOT DISREGARD MY PLIGHT, PAPER, FOR THE BRIDE OF THE FLAMES MUST SUBMIT TO A FAR HARSHER MASTER THAN YOU COULD EVER KNOW...


SO I HAVE PROMISED, AND SO THE TIME OF THE DANCE HAS COME.
HAA
HAA

THIS PLACE IS KNOWN AS THE HAUTE GALERIE CIRCULAIRE. THE ATRIUM OF THE BIBLIOTHEQUE D'ABADDON.

IT IS THUS THAT THE WORTH OF THESE VOLUMES REMAINS BEYOND THE DEFINITION OF THE LAW. BEYOND THE POWER OF THE SIGN OF THE BALANCE. THEY ARE TRADED IN SECRET, AND THEIR POWER UPON THE INNOCENTS GROWS WITH TIME.

THEIR ESSENCE IS THAT OF VENOMOUS WORMWOOD AND SO THEY HAVE BEEN BANISHED TO THIS PRESENT DARKNESS. THE WEAKEST ARE PRINTED OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS PRESS, AND DISTRIBUTED BY MEN WHO HAVE GIVEN INTO THE TEMPTATION OF THE SHADES.

PLEASE, DON'T DO THIS TO ME!

I'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING TO YOU! YOU HAVE NO REASON TO PREVENT ME FROM SAVING SUMIRE-GAWA-GENGE!!

.....

DO YOU KNOW WHERE WE ARE, GIRL?

WE STAND UPON THE PISTIL OF THE FABULOUS FLOWER WHOSE EXHAUST WHEN BURNT IS THE SOURCE OF HIS LIVELIHOOD, AND FERTILIZED IT IS OF THE HEARTS OF THE UNBLEMISHED. THIS IS THE OVARY OF THE BIRD THAT GIVES FORTH THE EGG OF GOLD.

THESE ARE THE PETALS AND LEAVES UPON WHICH MY EMPLOYER AND HIS GREY SERVANTS THRIVE FOR THEY GAIN SUSTENANCE ENTIRELY BY THEIR TRADE OF IMMORALITY.

"SO IN MY LOYALTY TO IMPEDE HER PROGRESS, I MAKE MY STAND; I DESTROY THE RESOURCE SHE ALONE IS FREE TO CONTROL."

"MINE ENEMY HAS ESCAPED HER PRISON, AND WREAKS HAVOC IN THE PLACE OF THE LEAVES."

?

SOON, THOUGH, THE EGG SHALL CRUMBLE, AND THE FLOWER SHALL BE AS INCENSE BEFORE A TOMBSTONE. THAT IS WHY I AM HERE...

DIDN'T I SAY?

YOU MEAN, YOU LEFT THAT BIT OF PAPER FOR ME ON PURPOSE?

!

"WITH IT, SHE TOO IS RENDERED NOTHING BUT DUST." IS THIS NOT A WONDERFUL SCRIPT DESERVING OF PRAISE? IN LETTERS OF CRIMSON, I SHALL WRITE IT UPON THE PAGES YOU COMMAND.

THE BRIDE OF PAPER YOU ARE KNOWN TO BE. AND FOR THAT MY EMPLOYER SHALL BELIEVE MY ACTIONS JUST HOW ELSE MAY I ENSURE THE EXECUTION OF HIS HIGHER CAUSE BUT TO SACRIFICE HIS PRECIOUS TOMES?

HA HA HA

THE PATH TO BE BURNED IS NOT WIDE ENOUGH FOR THE BOTH OF US!!

!!!

DO YOU FEEL IT? THE HEAT IS RESONATING IN THE VENTRICLES OF YOUR HEART ..

THE UNEASINESS WITH WHICH YOUR SOUL FLICKERS IS BEAUTY IN MY EYES!!

AH... AHH...

POUR YOUR HEART INTO WHAT LITTLE TIME YOU HAVE LEFT TO LIVE, AND MAKE THE BEST OF IT! DANCE THE DANCE OF THE FLAMES!

DANCE, PAPER MASTER, FOR LIFE IS BUT A TRANSIENT DREAM! I CLAIM FOR YOU FOR THE GLORY AND LIGHT OF MY LORD AND MASTER! ACCEPT THE WARMTH OF HIS LOVE!!

VERY GOOD. YOU DEMONSTRATE MUCH ENTHUSIASM FOR YOUR UPCOMING PERFORMANCE.

THE JUSTICE YOU CLAIM, HOWEVER, CANNON MAINTAIN ITSELF IN THIS PLACE MY LORD HAS RECLAIMED FROM ABADDON. THE LAWS OF THE BOOK CANNOT REACH THIS PLACE, FOR THIS IS NO LONGER A PLACE OF LEAVES.

THE FIRE THAT BURNS BEHIND THE WINDOWS OF YOUR SOUL... THE FLAMES THAT GRANT THESE PAGES REBIRTH FROM THEIR CURSED EXISTENCES... ALL OF THESE FUEL THE GLORY OF MY LORD.

THIS PLACE IS A PLACE OF FIRE AND FIRE ALONE.

UNFORGIVABLE...

WHAT YOU'VE DONE IS COMPLETELY UNFORGIVABLE.

WITH THE NEWBORN EMBERS, I SHALL STAND AS AUDIENCE TO YOUR GRAND FINALE...

WITH THE MUSTY VOLUMES YOU ADMIRE, YOU SHALL BURN AND BE REBORN! THE MOMENT OF TRUTH IS UPON YOU, AND YOU SHALL EXPERIENCE THE CLIMAX OF YOUR EXISTENCE!!

HAA

THIS DRAMA OF THE CRIMSON FLAMES!

YOU SHALL BE AS BOTH ACTRESS AND AUDIENCE IN THIS DRAMA...

!!

!!

TO

WHAT IS THIS?

THAT'S...

...THE BRITISH LIBRARY'S SPECIAL OPS!

!?

IT DOES APPEAR THAT I'VE GUESSED CORRECTLY YET AGAIN, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

I DO SAY, THIS SELF-PRONOUNCED "*BIBLIOMANIAC*" HAS CHOSEN HIS PLACE OF RESIDENCE QUITE SUITINGLY LIKE THOSE WHO CAME TO THIS ISLAND BEFORE HIM, HE'S IMPRISONED HIMSELF IN A WINDOWLESS CHAMBER OF DARK AND DEVIANT THOUGHTS..

A COMPLEX JUST OFF OF THE COAST OF TOKYO, DESIGNATED BY THE PRE-WAR JAPANESE GOVERNMENT FOR THE IMPRISONMENT OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS CRIMINALS OF THOUGHT NOW RENOVATED AS A MASSIVE PRIVATE LIBRARY...

THIS... THIS IS...

AAAH!

I SHALL BEAR WITNESS TO YOUR CHOICE, WHATEVER IT MAY BE...

...OR WILL YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE CONSUMED BY THE FLAMES OF MADNESS? EITHER CHOICE YOU MAKE WILL GRANT YOU FREEDOM, AND EITHER CHOICE WILL GIVE YOU DEATH.

AND NOW, PAPER MASTER, I GIVE YOU A CHOICE. DO YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE ENSLAVED BY THE LOVE OF READING YOU INHERITED FROM YOUR PREDECESSOR...

"I SHALL WIPE FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH..."

"ALL WHO STAND AGAINST THEE!"

NEGOTIATORY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LIBRARY'S DIVISION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS.

CODENAME: THE PAPER.

"IN THY NAME, BURIED BENEATH THE SEAS OF MORTAL THOUGHT, I STAND; I PLEDGE MYSELF TO THY ESSENCE, MISTRESS OF THE NINE. BESTOW UPON THY UNWORTHY SERVANT THY POWER..."

FOR THE INJURIES YOU'VE INFLICTED UPON MY MISTRESS, I CALL HER FORTH... "HEED MY WORD, THOU WHO INSPIRES LOVE BEYOND MADNESS... HEAR MY PLEA, THOU WHO RECORDETH THE PASSAGE OF THE AGES..."

READ

OR

DIE?

IT SEEMS THAT YOUR EMPLOYER HAS CHOSEN TO INTERFERE IN OUR MATCH BY PROVIDING YOU AMMUNITION!

SUCH A FOOLISH, USELESS ACT... IT MATTERS NOT. LET OUR MATCH CATCH AFLAME, THE PAPER!

...LIKE YOU SAY... OUR POWERS ARE MIRACLES BORNE OF AN AFFECTION INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM MADNESS...


I'VE COME TO TAKE OUT THE TRASH!

EXCUSE ME?

ER, I'M SORRY SIR. I WAS ASKING IF AGENT READMAN REQUIRES BACKUPS? I'LL RADIO THE BRANCH OFFICE IF IT'S NECES-SARY...

ARE YOU SURE THERE'S NO NEED TO SEND IN BACKUPS, SIR?

I'M SURE THAT THE PAPER GREATLY APPRECIATES YOUR CONCERN, BUT THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT SORT OF THING

YOU SHOULD RECALL THAT IN THE AREA OF PAPER-CONTROL, MS. READMAN POSSESSES THE STRONGEST NEN ABILITY WE'VE SEEN SINCE THE FOUNDING OF OUR DIVISION. TRUST HER TO HER AREA OF SPECIALIZATION, GOOD MAN. I'M CER-TAIN SHE'LL COME THROUGH.

WHY DO YOU TRUST HER SO MUCH, SIR?

THE TARGET'S NEN ABILITY IS POTENTIALLY CAPABLE OF NEUTRALIZING THE AMMUNITION WE'VE SUPPLIED TO AGENT READMAN. THE SITUATION IS RATHER DANGEROUS.

EH?

YOU COULD SAY IT'S LOVE...

MS. READMAN IS AMONGST THE BLESSED FEW WHO HAVE KNOWN THE POWER OF SUCH EMOTION. THAT IS WHY I TRUST HER.

MANY ARE THEY WHO WOULD PROFESS A DEEP AND PROFOUND LOVE OF THE WRITTEN WORD, BUT THE ONES WHO HAVE EARNED ANY LOVE IN RETURN ARE FEW AND FAR IN BETWEEN. LOVE THAT IS MUTUAL KNOWS NO BOUNDS, AND EVEN IN DEATH OR DESTRUCTION IT PERSEVERES EVERLASTING

...EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD.

IT GOES TO SUCH LENGTHS NOT ONLY BECAUSE SHE'S INFUSED IT WITH HER LIFE, BUT BECAUSE IT KNOWS THAT SHE'S WILLING TO SACRIFICE EVERYTHING FOR IT ...

THE LOVE OF PAPER PERSISTS THROUGH TEARS AND BURNS, AND EVEN ANNIHILATION.

UTTER DESTRUCTION IS NOT ENOUGH TO KEEP IT FROM LONGING TO RETURN TO HER SIDE.

HELLO? YES, THIS IS THE JOKER

...IT'S ME.

BEEP

BEEP

FOR THAT, IT IS WILLING TO REMAIN AT HER SIDE IN THE FACE OF ANY DIFFICULTY SHE MIGHT ENCOUNTER..

IMMEDIA-TELY... PAPER... LIKE SO...

MANCHURIA GAKUEN... YOU MUST...

→BEEP←
→BEEP←

→BEEP←
→BEEP←

THERE ISN'T ANYTHING WRONG, IS THERE?

UTTERLY HORRID RECEPTION ON THE SEA, I TELL YOU. I SHOULD PROBABLY CHANGE SERVICE PROVIDERS OR SOMETHING...

ER, MR. JOKER?

THE GENTLEMAN APPEARS TO BE GETTING AGITATED I SHOULD PROBABLY RETURN BEFORE HE HURTS HIMSELF SENILITY STRIKES DOWN EVEN THE GREATEST, I SUPPOSE.

EVERYTHING'S JUST FINE AND DANDY...

NO, NOTHING'S WRONG.

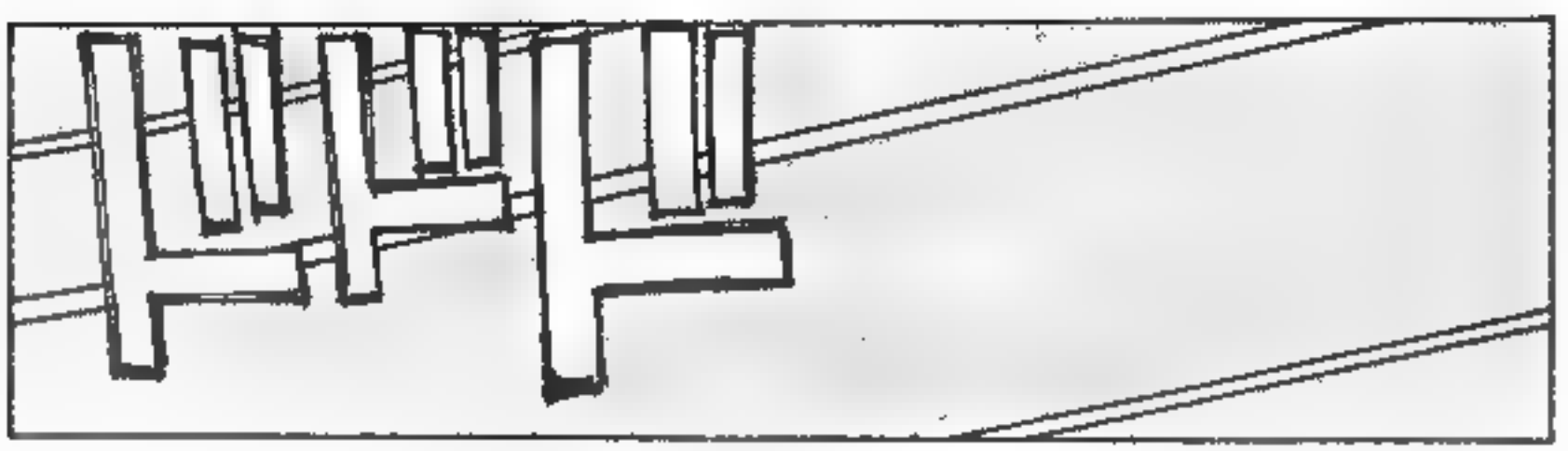
I'D HOPE TO ASK MS. READMAN TO GIVE ME DEFINITE ANSWER TO MY QUESTION ...

IF IT'S POSSIBLE, THOUGH...



*Manga-Sketchbook@WONDERnet

CHAPTER SEVEN



HEH!

YAAAAH!

DIE, BITCH!

!!!

KYAAA!

IF YOU LACK THE SKILL TO EVADE EVEN THE WEAKEST OF MY ATTACKS, YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO THE HONOR OF NAMING YOURSELF A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LIBRARY! YOU'RE NOTHING MORE THAN A PAPER TIGER!

YOU!...

A DECOY?

!?

I WARN YOU, YIN-SAN ...

WHAT AFFRONT YOU HAVE DEALT TO MY MISTRESS SHAN'T BE EASILY PARDO-NED!

WHAT!?

AAAH!


RAAAAH!!
!!
HAAA!

AAH!

!?

IT SEEMS THAT AT THE LEAST YOUR ABILITY EQUALS WHAT IS SUGGESTED IN THE LEGENDS OF YOUR REPUTATION, THE PAPER.

THEY FAIL TO CONVEY YOUR STRENGTH ACCURATELY

YOU SURPASS MY ESTIMATES BY FAR TRULY. IN THE MANNER THAT THE PAGES AND LEAVES GO AT LENGTH TO OBEY YOUR EVERY BECK AND CALL, IT APPEARS YOUR MISTRESS COVETS YOUR LOVE FOR HER NEARLY TO THE POINT OF ADDICTION.

HNNH...

I REALIZE NOW THAT DEPTHS OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP CAN NOT BE REPRESENTED IN TERMS SO RELATIVELY SHALLOW AS THE VOWS EXCHANGED BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN OR THE PACTS OF LOYALTY FORMED OF MASTER AND SERVANT IT IS DEEPER YET...

PANT

IT IS A RELATIONSHIP OF ABSOLUTE TRUST, PERHAPS UNFATHOMABLY DEEPER THAN EVEN THE BOND I SHARE WITH MY LORD.

PANT

IN ALL THE EXPANSE OF THE GREAT WORK THERE IS NO PAGE THAT WOULD STAND AGAINST YOU OR BAR YOUR PATH. THE SCRIPTURES THEMSELVES MUST PROSTRATE IN PRAYER FOR YOUR LIFE THIS VERY MOMENT

I AM DEAF TO THEIR PLEA!

THE LOVE WITH WHICH I AM BLESSED BURNS AND DEVOURS AS IT SO PLEASES. THAT WHICH IS FED TO ITS MAWL IS LOST AND I AM DOOMED HENCE TO BE FOREVER AMONGST THE WOMEN BURNED MY ENVY AND DISGUST FOR YOU, YOUR MISTRESS, AND YOUR LOVE MOVE MY HAND TO THE FLAME IN THIS HOUR...

WHITE ANGELS SHALL STAND SILENT WITNESS TO THE MOMENT OF YOUR FORSAKING, FOR AS YOUR JUDGEMENT IT HAS BEEN PREORDAINED.

FEAR NOT, FOR IN A MOMENT, MY LORD SHALL END YOUR SUFFERING, AND THEN YOU SHALL BE AS DUST FOR YOU, THE THIRD DAY IS NEVER TO COME.

SO AS WITH THE CHRIST UPON GOLGOTHA, THE CALVARY AWAITS YOU. HANGING FROM THE CROSS YOU HAVE CARRIED, YOU SHALL GIVE FORTH YOUR FINAL BREATH!

DONNY...

C'MON, COULD YOU GIVE ME A CLUE OR SOMETHING? *PRETTY PLEASE?* I DON'T WANNA BE STUCK ON THE PHLOGISTIQUE FOREVER. I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING, BUT THE PAPER JUST KEEPS BURNING AWAY

HEH. I DO BELIEVE YOU'LL FIND THE CONVENTIONAL TECHNIQUES YOU'VE TRAINED YOURSELF IN TO BE QUITE USELESS IN DEALING WITH THE PHLOGISTIQUE AND THE GEHENNA.

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HAA!

FUU

I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE. I'VE ALREADY TRIED EVERYTHING I KNOW ..

REMEMBER THESE WORDS, FOR UPON THEM OUR PREDECESSOR FOUNDED OUR LINE: "WHENCE DOTH COME LOVE, BUT OF HEART? IT IS THROUGH THE LENSES OF EMOTION THAT WE READ THE WORLD. AND FROM ITS CURVATURE THAT WE COME TO LEARN TO LOVE AND TRUST THIS IS OUR POWER."

THE MOMENT YOU ESTABLISHED THE BURNING OF THE PAPER TO BE INEVITABLE IN YOUR MIND, YOU ACCEPTED THE DOMINION OF RATIONALITY OVER LOVE, TRUST AND DESIRE. OUR REALITY IS NOT FOUNDED IN RATIONALITY ALONE, YOMIKO. IT IS NOT FROM THE MIND THAT WE DERIVE OUR SKILL

EH?

WHAT DO YOU

SEEING AS YOU ARE HAVING A BIT OF TROUBLE GETTING PAST THE READER'S BLOCK, I'LL TAKE PITY ON YOU FOR ONCE AND TEMPORARILY WAIVE MY POLICY AGAINST ACADEMIC DISHONESTY TELL ME, YOMIKO...HOW IS IT THAT YOU'VE DETERMINED THE BURNING OF PAPER TO BE THE UNAVOIDABLE RESULT OF ATTEMPTED INCINERATION?

USE THE FORCE LOVE AND TRUST THE WEAPON YOU WIELD MORE THAN ANY MORTAL DARES TO FEEL OF ANY ENTITY .. NONE SHALL DARE TO CHALLENGE THE STRENGTH OF THE MISTRESS.

OUR MASTERY IS NOT FOUNDED IN THE MERE READING OF BOOKS, BUT IN OVERCOMING THE ENTROPIC TENDENCIES OF RATIONALITY WITH ITS RECIPROCAL

H-HOW CAN THIS BE? A SECOND WIND? HER INJURIES SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST INCAPACITATED HER LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO FINISH HER OFF FROM WHERE DOES SHE GAIN HER STRENGTH?

THIS CHILD...

WAAAAAH!

THE PAPER!

USE THE FORCE .. LOVE AND TRUST THE WEAPON YOU WIELD MORE THAN ANY MORTAL DARES TO FEEL OF ANY ENTITY...

你的紙

Your Paper

就不會輸給任何東西!!!

SUPERGOD

HAA

HAA

KYAA!

YIN-SAN!

IS THIS... THE END TO WHICH I HAVE BEEN CONSIG-NED. MY LORD? IS IT SO LATE THAT I CAN NO LONGER BREAK OF YOUR EMBRACE?

I HAVE BEEN CONSUMED BY MY OWN LOVE...

HAHA...

THE IRONY BURNS, DOES IT NOT?

YIN-SAN!! DON'T MOVE! I'LL TRY TO GET YOU OUT!

MY FLAMES...

THE TOTALITY OF MY BEING...

DON'T YOU DARE TO TOUCH ME, YOU FRICKIN' PERV!!

NO! GET THE FUCK OFF! WHAT ARE YOU TRYIN' TO DO!?

WHAT IS THIS THING!?

THE DISTANCES OF SPACE... THE DIFFERENCES OF TIME AND AGE...

DEFEATING THESE ODDS THAT THE FATES HAVE IN THEIR LUSTFUL WHIMS SET TO OPPOSE AND RAVAGE THE POSSIBILITY OF OUR MATRIMONY, WE HAVE BECOME FOREVER ENJOINED.

READER... WRITER... FOR SO LONG, THE HOST OF THE GREAT WHORE THAT IS BABEL HAS SOUGHT TO DIVIDE US, SUCH THAT NONE BUT THE TRUTH OF THE WORD WOULD HOLD OUR TIE STEADFAST THE SOLE REMNANT OF OUR HOLY BONDAGE

HENCEFORTH, THE HOST SHALL PREVAIL NO LONGER.

!!

UNDER THE LIGHT OF THE BLOOD MOON, THE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN HAS BOUND OUR DIGITS WITH THE RED STRING HE RESERVES FOR THOSE DESTINED TO BE WITH EACH OTHER.

WAIT A SEC! WHAT'D YOU JUST SAY!?

SO TO PROVE MY FAITHFULNESS...

BY THEM, I SWEAR TO LOVE YOU...

...TO CHERISH YOU.

IT IS SUCH THAT THESE RINGS WE WEAR ACT TO FINALIZE OUR PAIRING IN THE SEAL OF THE ROSE-CROIX.

SO LONG AS THE SAGE DOES NOT EMERGE OF YOUR MAIDENHEAD, I SHALL GUIDE YOU.

STOP IGNORING ME, YOU FUCK!!

...UPON THE IMPERFECTIONS YOU HAVE THUS FAR COMMITTED TO WRITING, I SHALL PERFORM MY DUTY AS YOUR NEWLY-WED GROOM. YOUR FLOWER OF TARTARUS I SHALL PENETRATE AND CLAIM FOR MY OWN.

!!

!!

LET US WALK, MY DEAR PAUL SHELDON.

COME...

SOMEBODY GET ME OUTTA HERE! READMAN-SAN!

LET ME GO, YOU BAS-TARD!

GNN

WHEN IN THE GARDEN THAT IS THE HEXAGONE CRAMOISI, READER AND WRITER FORM PERFECT UNION...

IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEWBORN WORD, THE POWER TO REVOLU-TIONIZE THE WORLD MANI-FESTS!

HA

THIS "LOVE" YOU CLAIM TO CONVEY S THE ANTITHESIS OF ALL THAT LOVE IS MEANT TO REPRESENT...

HA

TRUE LOVE ISN'T EXPRESSED THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF FORCE. IT'S FOUNDED IN CARE, TRUST, AND MUTUAL RESPECT...

THIS IS THE TRUTH BY WHICH I'M DETERMINED TO LIVE.

HA

TO NONE OTHER BUT THE BOOKS DO I GIVE THE RIGHT TO WITNESS THIS META-MORPHOSIS.

WHO WILL ANSWER? HOW MIGHT YOU ESCAPE? YOU ARE IN MY DOMAIN, AND WE ARE ALONE.

AS ONE OF THE GIRLS IN MY UNION PUT IT, "SORE WA AI JANAI ..."

!!

I SHALL COAX THE DIVINE HERMA-PHRODITISM TO MANIFEST OF YOUR WOMB, SUCH THAT THE TRUTH OF THE WORD MIGHT AWAKEN IN YOUR VOICE.

BY MY LOVE, THE MISGUIDED FLOCK SHALL BE TAUGHT THE ERROR IN THEIR WAYS...

THIS "LOVE" ...

FUFUFU.

SO WE MEET AT LAST.. I SHOULD SAY I'M RATHER HONORED YOU SEE IT FIT TO GRACE OUR HUMBLE CEREMONY WITH YOUR PRESENCE, MS. YOMIKO READMAN. MAY I REFER TO YOU AS "THE PAPER?"

PLEASE... FOR THE SAKE OF THE BOOKS, PLEASE LET SUMIREGAWA-SENSEI GO...

HAA

WHAT YOU ARE DOING ISN'T RIGHT IT ISN'T PROPER BEHAVIOR FOR A READER TO GO ABOUT KIDNAPPING WRITERS AND TRYING TO RAPE THEM.

HAA

SHE DID SEEM RATHER EXCITED AT THE PROSPECT OF HAVING GUESTS OVER TO TRY OUT THE RECIPE SHE'D PREPARED FOR ROAST PORK...

A SHAME IT WAS HER FIRST TRUE TASK AS A MAID-SERVANT IN MY SERVICE

IT'D BE RATHER TYPICAL OF ME TO NAME OUR SIMILARITIES AT THIS POINT SO I'LL SPARE YOU THE TROUBLE OF LISTENING. I TAKE IT THE COOKING YIN PREPARED FOR YOU DIDN'T INTEREST YOU ALL THAT MUCH?

OH, IT'S YOU! G'DAY ER, GOOD EVENING, SUMIREGAWA-SENSEI! SORRY ABOUT THAT. I WOKE UP JUST A TINY BIT AGO, AND I DO SEEM TO HAVE MISPLACED MY WATCH. I WAS LOOKING FOR IT JUST NOW...

WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU SAYING? HOW COME YOU'RE ALL INJURED AND SHIT!?

SHALL WE PROCEED WITH THIS, THEN?

YOMIKO-SENSEI!

SEN-SEI...

THIS IS THE LENGTH I SHALL GO TO DEMONSTRATE MY LOYALTY TO YOU AS A FAN. THIS IS ALL THAT I HAVE LEFT...

SENSEI. I'M HERE BECAUSE I PROMISED TO PROTECT YOU. THE PAIN THAT I NOW FEEL IN MY FLESH AND BONES IS INSIGNIFICANT WHEN COMPARED WITH THE DUTY I'M COMMITTED TO. ALL THAT I CAN STILL GRASP WITH MY HEART IN THIS WORLD IS AT STAKE

YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT THESE BURNS, SUWAREGAWA-SENSEI. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A BIT CLUMSY AND SLOW, AND I'M USED TO SMALL INJURIES. I'VE DEFINITELY RECOVERED FROM WORSE.

YOU'VE GOTTA GET MEDICAL ATTENTION OR SOME-THING!

UNH!

IF YOUR LOVE FOR THE MISTRESS IS TRUE, KNOW THAT YOU HAVE SET COURSE THE ROAD TO BABEL. REPENT, FOR PAST THE POINT OF NO RETURN, THE PHANTOM CLAIMS YOU FOR DARKNESS ETERNAL...

I HAVEN'T YET LEARNED YOUR NAME, SIR, BUT I CAN SENSE IN YOU A TRUE LOVE OF THE WORD CAN YOU NOT HEAR IN THIS CHAMBER THE CRIES OF THE BOOKS? IN PAIN, THEY PRAY FOR YOU TO HALT IN YOUR PATH.

THE SPOKEN WORD FAILS TO APPEAL TO MY APPETITE. DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR DEAR MS. SHELDON, THE PAPER. I HAVE A FEELING SHE AND I WILL GET ALONG FAMOUSLY

A FLAIR FOR POETRY, I SEE UNFOR-TUNA-TELY...

NO!!!

SEN-SENSEI!!

HAVE YOU NOT SEEN THE UGLINESS THAT LIES BENEATH HER SKIN? HER TRUE FACE...

DEAR HERMAPHRODITE? COULD IT BE THAT THIS WOMAN HASN'T YET REMOVED FOR YOU HER MASK OF PURITY?

IN SELLING OUR SOULS TO THE MISTRESS OF THE NINE WE'VE BECOME LITTLE MORE THAN SLAVES TO THE WORD THE PAPER IS BUT A MARIONETTE THAT HAS EMERGED OF THE PAGES OF SOME OBSCURE AND UNKNOWN VOLUME.

SO IT IS

BENEATH THE GUISE OF INNOCENCE, SHE IS OF THE SAME ESSENCE AS I THAT WHICH YOU FIND SO HIDEOUS IN ME EXISTS A HUNDRED-FOLD IN THE CENTER OF HER HEART

TRUE... TRUE FACE?

THE PAPER.

!!

BUT DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH...

YOU, A MERE PUPPET, WOULD DARE TO INSINUATE YOURSELF A GUARDIAN OF THE WORD?

YOU HAVE NO RIGHT! NO RIGHT AT ALL!

I'VE CONSIDERED YOUR WORDS OF WARNING

YOU CALLED FOR MY REPENT, WAS IT? TIS' A FAIR JEST, TO BE SURE

WHAT HAVE YOU SACRIFICED IN THE MADNESS OF YOUR LOVE?

DO YOU TRULY THINK I WOULD BE OBLIVIOUS TO YOUR HISTORY, MY DEAR? YOU'RE AN OPEN BOOK TO ME.

THE MISTRESS HAS GRANTED UNTO ME THE TASK OF RESURRECTING THE LOVE OF THE WORD. TO YOU? ONLY SERVITUDE TO HER ARBITUARY WHIMS! YOU DARE TO ACCUSE ME OF RAPE? WHAT CRIMES HAVE YOU COMMITTED THUS FAR?

THE PAGES OF YOUR LIFE ARE STAINED WITH NONE OTHER THAN THE BLOOD OF THE MAN WHO WAS TO YOU BOTH MENTOR AND LOVER... DONNY NAKAJIMA, THE EIGHTEENTH SUCCESSOR IN THE LINE OF THE PAPER!

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, MS. YOMIKO READMAN?

BY THE SINS YOU HAVE COMMITTED IN THE NAME OF THE BOOK, YOU ARE BOUND!!

SO BY THE BLOODCOVERED THREADS IN THE HAND OF THE MISTRESS YOU ARE MADE THE PAPER!!

Chapter 8

BE-CAUSE OF THE BOOKS!

TO BE-COME THE PAPER!

AND CHOSEN BOOKS INSTEAD ...!!

YOU HAVE FOR-SAKEN LOVE!

SO!? AM I WRONG ...!?

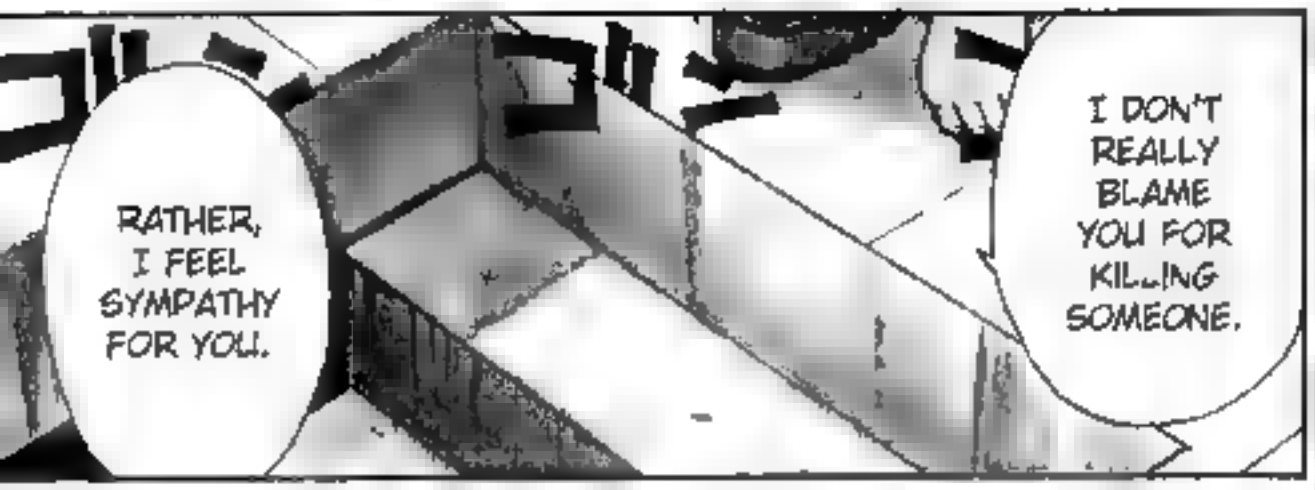
I- I...

YOU KILLED HIM, DIDN'T YOU, YOMIKO READ-MAN!?

YOU KILLED YOUR BENE-FACTOR DONNY MEGA-JIMA!


Chapter 8











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Scanned by AngelMercury, from #MangaProject on irc mircx com

WHAT ARE YOU NOW!?

NEI-THER PAPER ...!

NOR PER-SON!

I... I...

SHUT UP!!

JUST WHAT ARE YOU!?

THIS IS THE TRUE FACE OF THE ONE YOU CALL "SENSEI".

DON'T YOU GET IT YET?

SE-SEN-SEI...

YOU ARE NOT A WORTHY OPPO-NENT.

BIBLIO-MANIAC, AGENT... WHICHEVER YOU MAY BE, YOU'RE STILL HALF-RATE.

JUST KEEP STILL AND WATCH THIS.

!!

WELL? IS THIS GREAT OR WHAT?

YOU'LL SEE HOW MAGNIFI-CENT SUCH A PERSON CAN BE!

YOU'LL SEE HOW ONE WHO LIVES FOR BOOKS. A TRUE BIBLIO-MANIAC..

Trans ated by C-chan and zalas, from #MangaProject on irc mircx com

MangaProject cjb net

THIS WALL IS MADE FROM SUPER AKRIL, A MATERIAL STRONGER THAN IRON. YOU'LL HAVE TO WASTE A LOT OF POWER TO GET THROUGH.

TEACH ...!!

YOU SHOULD JUST STAY THERE AND OBSERVE THE BIRTH OF A NEW WORK OF ART.

JUST WATCH IT ALONG WITH YOUR BELOVED PAPERS.

YOU'RE ALL TALK!

SO, LET THE CEREMONY BEGIN, THEN!

WHAT DO YOU

OUR WEDDING CERE-MONY, OF COURSE!

!!

I TOLD YOU, IT'S USE-LESS.

!!

!!

HERE, LET ME SHOW IT TO YOU!

I THINK YOU'LL BE QUITE SATISFIED WITH IT.

A- ARE YOU SERI- OUS!?

WITH GOD, AND THE PAPER AS WIT- NESSES...

WHAT BETTER TIME COULD THERE BE THAN NOW?

ALSO, I HAVE A WEDDING DRESS THAT WILL FIT YOU JUST PEACHY.

DON'T MESS WITH ME!

.....

NOW, MY BRIDE, COME TO YOUR HUS- BAND, PAUL SHELDON.

THIS DRESS IS MADE FROM THE FINEST QUALITY OF PAPER FIBER THERE IS!

OH, THAT'S RIGHT! YOU SHOULD DECO- RATE THIS WEDDING DRESS WITH YOUR WRITINGS! A POEM FOR TWO PEOPLE MADLY IN LOVE!


N-NO ...
I'D RATHER DIE THAN MARRY YOU!
GAH!
GASP!
JEEZ, YOU'RE ALREADY DISOBEYING ME.. HOW WILL THIS WORK OUT...?
LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO TEACH YOU HOW TO BEHAVE!
KEH!


AND SWEAR THAT WE SHALL DEDICATE OUR LIVES AND BODIES TO LITERATURE!
HERE, PLACE YOUR HAND ON THIS BOOK
HEY, HEY, DON'T TAKE DEATH SO LIGHTLY.
COME ON!!
NOO ..!
IT'D BE BAD IF I TALKED LIKE THAT TOO, RIGHT?

WAIT FOR ME, SEN-SEI ..

JUST A BIT MORE, JUST A BIT...

PAIN ...

WHAT AN EYE-SORE...

SEN-SEI..

AND I'LL COME SAVE YOU!

HOW LONG WILL YOU KEEP EMBAR-RASSING YOURSELF, THE PA-PER!?

YOU STILL WON'T GIVE UP!?

DIDN'T I TELL YOU!? HER TALENT IS IMPORTANT, NOT HER BODY!

WE ARE ALL SLAVES TO BOOKS!! BOOKS ARE EVERY-THING!

IN YOUR HEART, YOU ALSO WISH IT, RIGHT !?

YOU WANT HER NEW WORKS! ALL NEW WORKS!

HAA

HAA

ALL OF US ARE DEFINITELY BOOK ADDICTS.

THAT IS TRUE.

.....

!!

YOU DON'T GET IT, EVEN AFTER READING ALL HER BOOKS!!

BUT

I HAVE ALSO GIVEN UP EVERYTHING FOR BOOKS...

THE THINGS SHE WROTE ARE HER OWN EXPERIENCES!

SHE PUT HER OWN ESSENCE INTO THOSE BOOKS! SORROW, TROUBLES, PAIN...

YET SHE KEEPS IT UP, WORD BY WORD... THAT IS THE SENSE! I KNOW!

UGH ...

THAT IS THE KIND OF AUTHOR... THAT I LIKE THE MOST...

IN ORDER TO GRANT HER FLIGHT, THE PAIN I INFLICT ...

SHUT YOUR TRAP!

IS NECES-SARY!

YOU ARE SO SELF-ISH!!

WITH SUCH CHILDISH-NESS, YOU WOULD CLIP THE WINGS OF TALENT!?

SHE DOESN'T NEED SOME TWISTED PAIN FROM YOU. .

HUFF PUFF

AND ALSO . .

HUFF

YOU ARE WRONG ...!

ALSO, EVEN IF IT IS SO ...!!

EVEN IF HER WORKS WON'T GO DOWN IN THE ANNALS OF LITERAL HISTORY...

EVEN IF HER WORKS WON'T WIN ALL KINDS OF PRIZES...

EVEN IF THEY CAN'T CHANGE THE WORLD, I DON'T CARE!

I JUST ...

I JUST ...

I WANT TO BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE YOU THROUGH YOUR BOOKS...

BECAUSE THAT'S HOW I CAME TO LIKE YOU!!

I JUST WANT TEACH TO STAY THE WAY SHE IS NOW!

!!


INFI-
DEL!!

TEACH,
RUN!!



STUPID... LETTING YOURSELF GET BEAT UP SO BADLY...

I'M SORRY ...

WHY ARE YOU APOLOG Z-ING, YOU SILLY SEN-SEI?

I'M SORRY ...

COME BACK, YOU BELONG TO ME...

TO PAUL SHEL-DON...

Y- YOU ...

IT WASN'T FOR SOMEONE ELSE!

I BECAME WHO I AM TODAY FOR MYSELF!

I AM NENE-NE!

NENENE SUMI-KAWA!!

GIVE UP! THAT'S THE LEAST YOU COULD DO AS ONE OF HER READ-ERS!

N-NO WAY

EVEN YOU...

EVEN YOU ARE GOING TO LEAVE ME?

TEACH

I'D BE A TOY FOR THE ONES WHO DON'T SEE THE VALUE OF TALENT...

HOW IS THAT ANY DIF-FERENT FROM DYING?

IF I GO TO JAIL... I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO READ BOOKS AGAIN...

NO WAY IN HELL DO I WANT THAT!

!!

TEACH

IT'S OVER NOW

IT'S FINALLY OVER...

!!

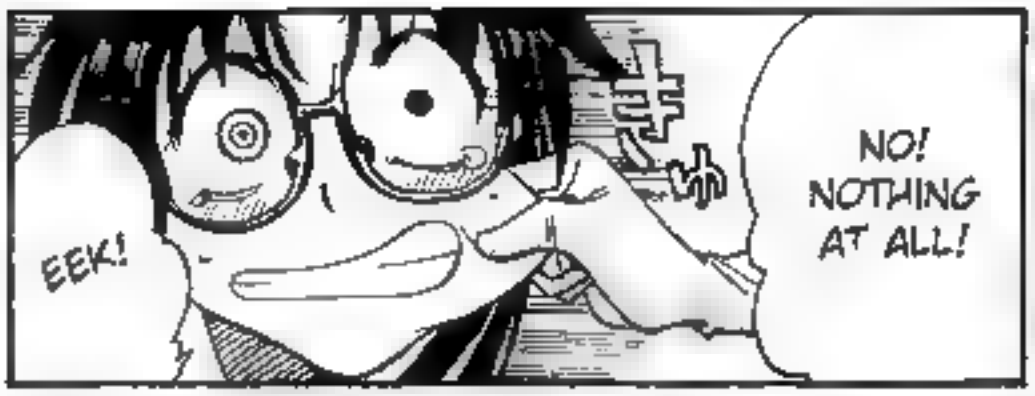
!?

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, THIS PLACE IS FALLING APART!

.....

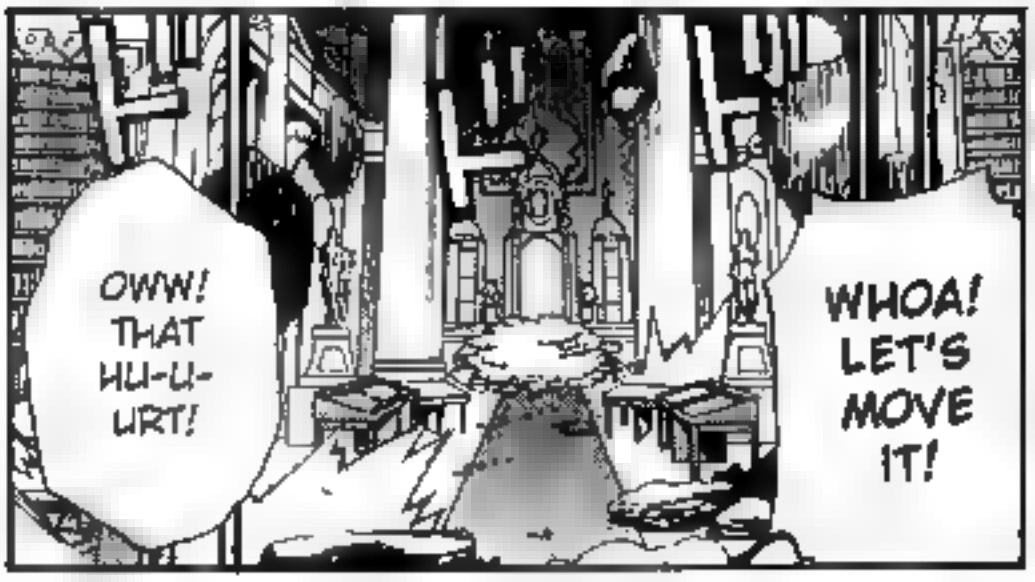
GAAAAAH!


YOU...
LET'S GET A MOVE ON!


EEK!
NO! NOTHING AT ALL!




HUH ?
DID YOU SAY SOME-THING, TEACH?


OWW! THAT HU-U-URT!
WHOA! LET'S MOVE IT!


SO IN THE END, THIS IS THE ONLY ONE LEFT?


PAUL, YOUR NEW WORKS WILL NEVER APPEAR FOR THIS WORLD TO ENJOY .
AHH .. NOBODY WILL BE SPARED, HUH?


AH... IT'S GONE .
EVERY-THING IS GONE...

...MO-
THER.

IT'S NO GOO-O-OOD! WE'LL NEVER GET OUT LIKE THIS!

CHEER UP! WE WILL BE RESCUED FOR SURE!

WAIT! LISTEN TO WHAT THEY SAID AFTER-WARDS!

IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE PRINCE AND PRIN-CESS, YOU KNOW!

HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE!?

I READ IN A BOOK ONCE THAT ONCE THE TWO MAIN CHARACTERS GET THROUGH IT ALL, THEY WILL GET A HAPPY END!

!!

RIGHT NOW, EVEN IF ALL THE MISFOR-TUNE IN THE WORLD FALLS UPON ME.

"NO ONE CAN STOP US FROM BEING TO-GETHER."

"AS LONG AS IT IS THAT WAY, I WILL BE HAPPY."

"AS LONG AS YOU REMAIN BY MY SIDE, AS LONG AS YOU UNDER-STAND ME..."

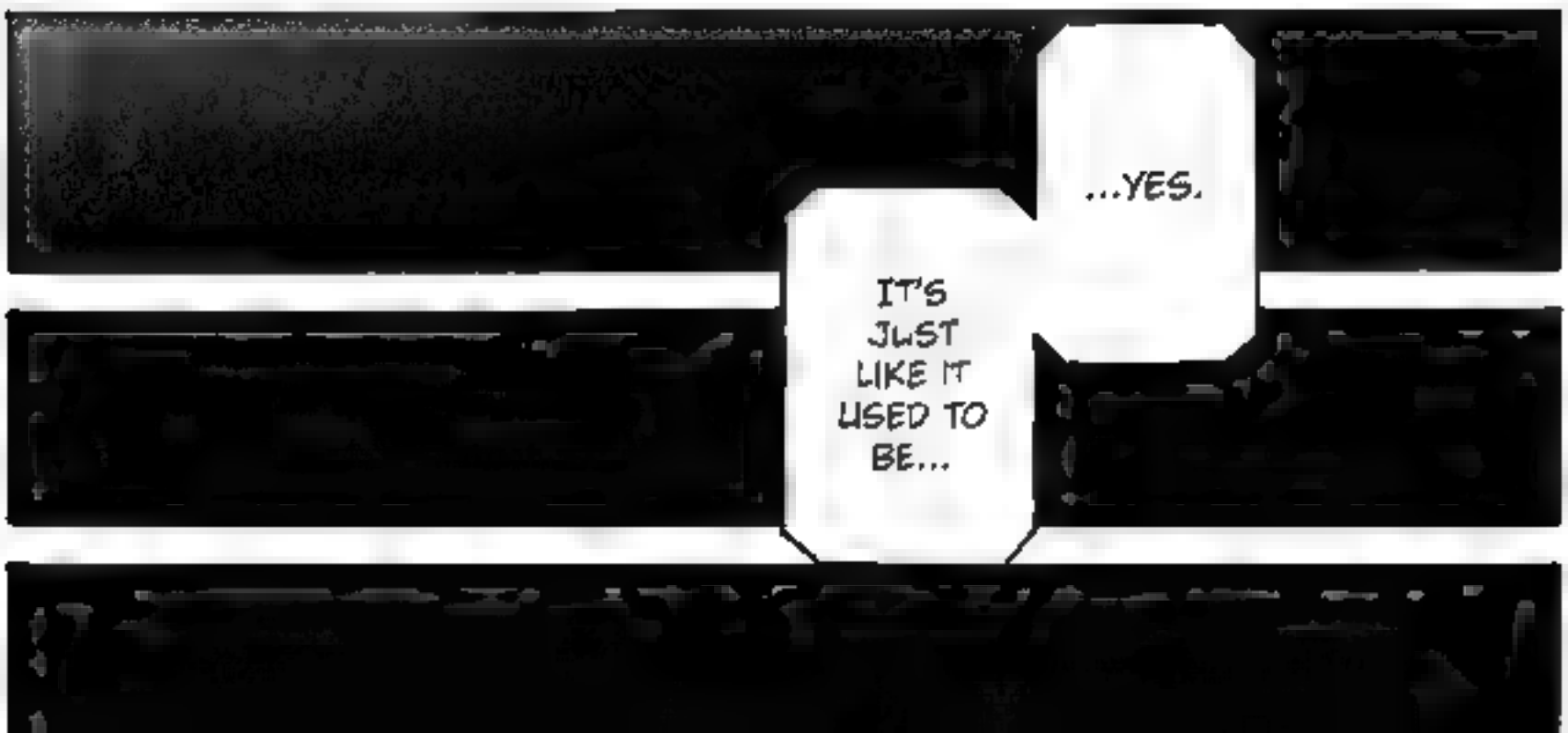
IT'S MY FAVORITE "FAIRY-TALE"..♡

THE TITLE WAS "YOUR HEART KNOWS MY HEART."

THE AUTHOR WAS NENENE SUMI-KAWA.






...YES.
IT'S JUST LIKE IT USED TO BE...

SOME THINGS SHOULD BE RECORDED IN THE SECRET ANNALS OF HISTORY.

NOT EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS INCIDENT WILL BE REPORTED.

HUH ...?

OH, THAT GIRL?

...ABOUT THE PART OF IT THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN TOLD...

THE TRANS-PORT TO THE SCHOOL HAS BEEN DONE.

DON'T WORRY OVER HER!

SHE'S THE PAPER, THE STRONGEST PAPER MASTER IN HISTORY!

MH ..
NNH ...
JEEZ ...
ARE YOU OKAY!? ARE YOU HURT!?

PAPER WILL ALWAYS BE THERE FOR HER.

COULD THIS BE MY CHANCE!?

TEACH! SNAP OUT OF IT!

'EI!
TIME FOR REVENGE!

SOO ...?

WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO DO WITH YOUR OTHER HAND?

HMMM ...!?

YOU WEREN'T GOING TO DO SOMETHING LIKE ***THIS***, WERE YOU? ♡

WHAT A LONG NIGHT THAT WAS...

YES.

IF HIS LOVE FOR BOOKS HADN'T BEEN DARK AND TWISTED, IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN LIKE THIS.

YOU MUST KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT.

WHEN DAWN COMES, ALL YOU CAN DO IS TRY TO TELL YOURSELF IT WAS A NIGHTMARE.

YOU KILLED YOUR BENE-FACTOR IN ORDER TO BECOME THE PAPER!

I'M... REALLY IN NO PO-SITION TO JUDGE HIM...

?

SEN-SEI?

IT MUST BE REALLY TROUBLING FOR YOU TO HAVE A READER LIKE ME...

HOW'D MY BOOK GET SO BEATEN UP AND BATTERED? HOW SAD...

AND IT WAS A FIRST EDITION, TOO!

BE-CAUSE I...

AAAAAH!!

TEACH ...!!

I DIDN'T HEAR A THING!

DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT EVERYTHING LAST NIGHT WAS JUST A NIGHTMARE, SENSEI?

DREAMS DISAPPEAR WHEN YOU WAKE UP, YOU KNOW!

HERE YOU GO.

HUH ?

DIDN'T YOU WANT A SIGNED BOOK?

AH...

BUT, TEACH ...

SINCE THIS IS THE FIRST BOOK I'VE EVER SIGNED!

YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT...

Thank you!!!

From Nenene Sumikawa

To my biggest fan, Yomiko Readman.



R.O.D Vol. ① - End

愛書而又為書所愛，
對書的執着更甚於性命的讀子
擁有隨意操控紙張的能力，
外號"The Paper"。
為了保護女高中生作家妮音，
讀子今番再次大顯身手，
力抗敵人！



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